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Nov. 12, 2014

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Sincerely,

Anna Groff

Interim Editor
The Mennonite

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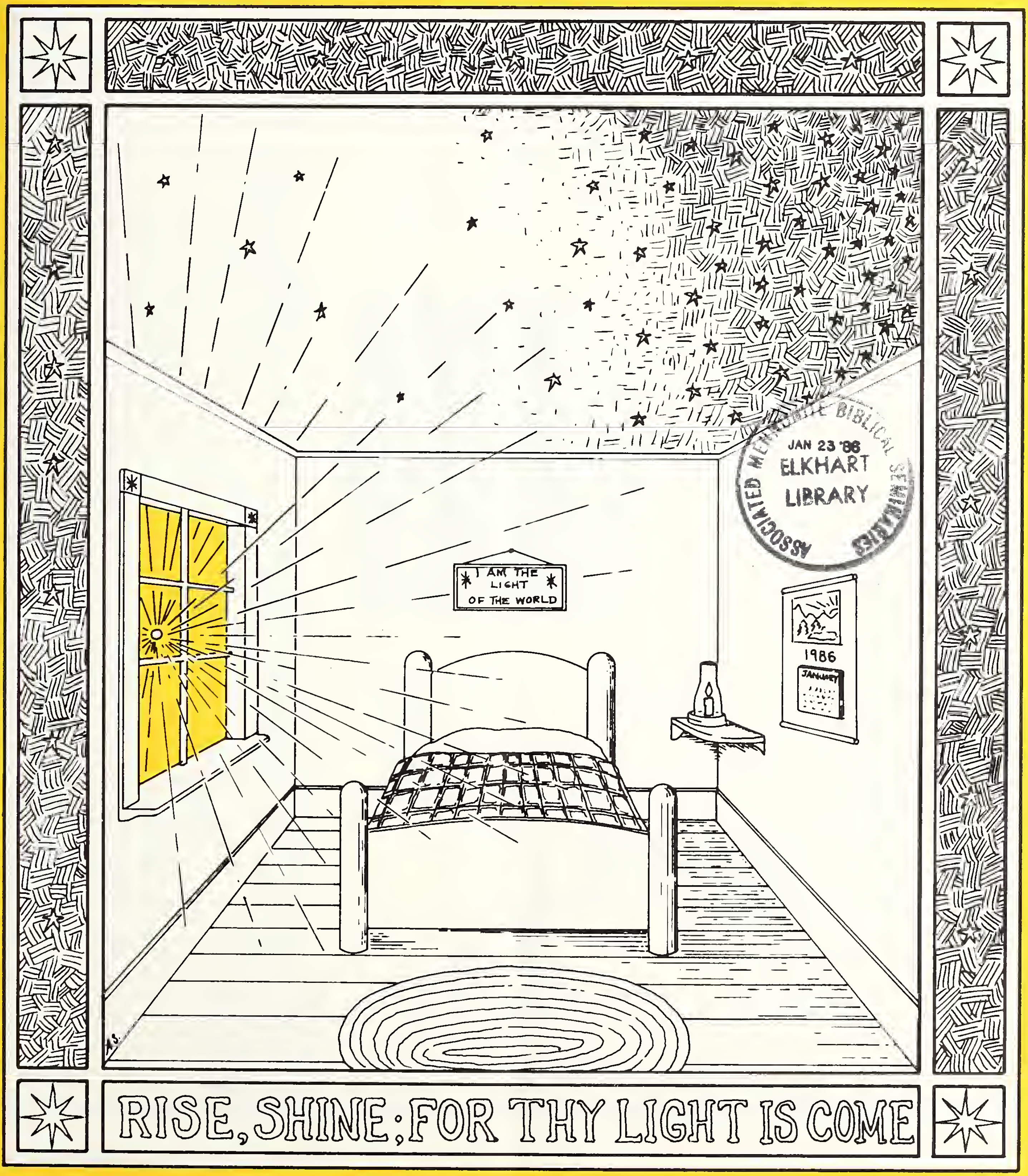
THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:01 JANUARY 14, 1986


I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD
1986
JANUARY
A.S.
RISE, SHINE; FOR THY LIGHT IS COME

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Gusto on a Damascus road

Karren Boehr

The letter arrived in the morning mail with an official gold seal affixed to the bottom corner. "How about something believable, true to life, for the 1986 New Year's issue," it read. Don't make it a fairy tale "peaches-and-cream story but an authentic Christ-meeting of a modern Zacchaeus or Saul or . . . something with meaning, roots, substance, security, assurance." The commission ended with an understanding "how's that for a challenge?"

"O . . . K," I mumbled to myself as the wheels of my thinking began roaring with uneasiness. For starters, I knew no one named Zacchaeus or Saul, and only a few Pauls—none of whom would qualify. At least not at the moment.

For weeks I pondered and prayed over the possibilities, looking for God's direction. And then one night it came. "It's in your blue notebook." The impression was so deafening it was as though all the giants in the land bellowed with one voice.

In the blue notebook were personal experiences people had shared with me from their hearts. Experiences with God so earth-shaking in their magnitude, I had grabbed a pencil and recorded everything they could remember. Somehow, I knew when the opportunity was right, God would draw from that notebook.

"Lord, remember, the story is supposed to be true to life," I argued. "That notebook isn't exactly tomato soup and cheese sandwiches."

When one really thinks about it, arguing with God is probably one of the most futile things we have ever attempted.

The matter was settled.

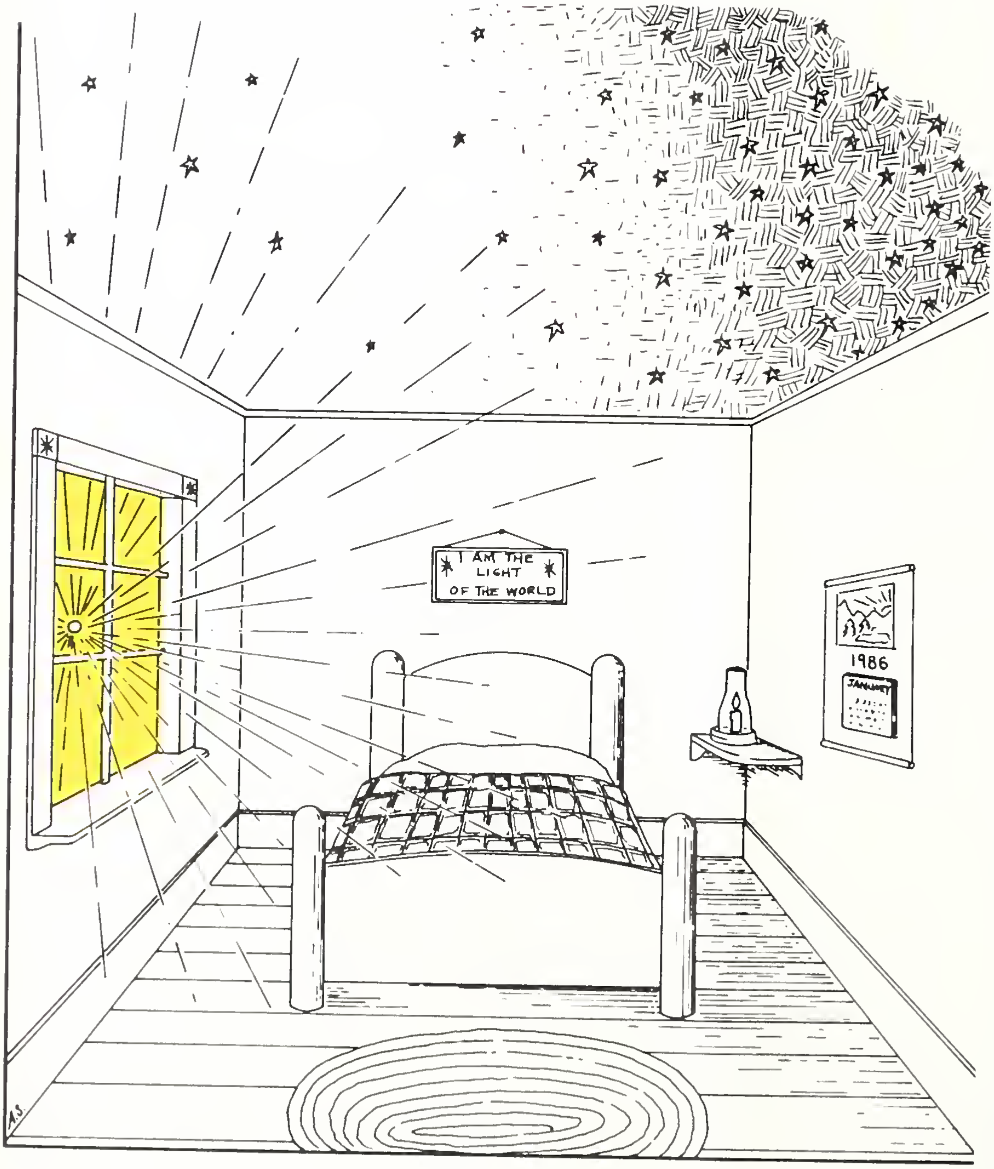
Digging out the notebook from under a mound of papers on my desk, I began refreshing my memory back to the evening when the gentle carpenter sat at our kitchen table. My husband and I had met him and his wife at a Christian conference some months before. Now, traveling from Michigan to Arizona in search of work, he had stopped in our home for the night.

His face was that of a young man bordering the edges of maturity; only the thinnest lines in his forehead and cheeks indicated the experiences that now lay behind. These experiences had brought him far, had changed his life and the way he looked at things. His excitement and love for the Lord were so compelling he could hardly touch his supper. Several times he opened the much-worn Bible laid reverently to the left of his plate. Then, realizing his food was becoming cold, he apologized for getting sidetracked, only to be derailed again four or more bites down the road. It was as though something inside was bubbling like a fountain.

"Work's been slow," he said finally, pushing back from the table, "so I've been spending my extra time at the feet of the Father. I've studied his Word. I've spent time listening to his voice. I've gotten down on my knees, seeking that I would become less and he would become more." Almost reverently he took us where he had been led.

Growing up in a stable but godless home, constantly under the shadow of a talented twin brother and a younger sister, Thomas' life from early on was filled with struggle. Plagued with a stammering tongue and painfully shy, he was made the brunt of other children's ridicule, and the nickname stuck—"Mental Retard."

Thomas was considered unteachable.


I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD
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JANUARY
A.S.

By the time he reached the ninth grade he had simply been passed on year after year, learning little, mostly just occupying space.

One night, challenged by a television commercial, Thomas began the insatiable search that would change his life. "You only go around once," the announcer beckoned, "so grab all the gusto you can get."

"If I only go around once," Thomas pondered, "what's the gusto I'm supposed to be getting?" The question became an obsession that would not leave him any peace.

When an English assignment in mythology talked about God, Thomas' restlessness was heightened. He asked everyone he saw whether they thought there was a God. Because he was a "retard," no one paid any attention to his inquiries until one afternoon an observant study hall teacher handed him the book *Run Baby Run* by Nicky Cruz and encouraged him to read it.

Sensing an urgency, Thomas raced home. Pulling up a chair to the kitchen table where his mother was preparing supper, he read. When he came across a word he did not know, which was most of the time, he sought help. Night after night he sat at that kitchen table struggling and grasping as the life of Nicky Cruz was changed by a loving Jesus right before his eyes. "If Jesus can help Nicky, then he can help me," Thomas decided.

The dilemma was that Thomas did not know where he could go to find out more about this Jesus. His parents told him to forget his foolishness, but Thomas wanted that gusto the commercial talked about, and he refused to give up the search.

One evening several months later a woman asked Thomas to babysit. After the children had been put to bed, Thomas wandered into the living room and, noticing a book on the coffee table, he picked it up. Flopping onto the couch, he opened it in the middle. However, weariness overtook him before he had a chance to read the first word.

When the husband and wife returned, they found Thomas sleeping. Their *Living Bible* was open on his chest. Thinking he must be interested in spiritual things, the woman suggested to Thomas that she could either pay him for his services or he could have the Bible. Because it was worth more than what he would receive in money, Thomas elected to take the book.

Jesus said:
Ye Must Be
Born Again
John 3:7

> *"Thomas knew his God was real, that the price had been paid and until eternity ended he was free—free!"*

Drawn to the contents of that *Living Bible* and with the patient help of a young girl who later became his wife, Thomas learned to read. Day after day, week after week, the words took on meaning as the life and love of Jesus unfolded before the eyes of the young man everyone considered unteachable. During the following year, Thomas read through the Bible four times and watched his reading skills not only move up to grade level, but the Ds and Fs on his report card become As and Bs. "Mental Retard" became an honor student.

But God had only begun. Now able to read on his own, Thomas spent hours pouring over the Bible, excited about the truths he found tucked within its pages. Realizing his sinfulness, he asked Jesus to become his Savior. Immediately he ran headlong into a snag. The guilt of his sins did not leave him. They stalked his every thought until suicide seemed the only release. No one Thomas knew could assure him that Jesus had indeed paid the price.

One night, when the torment was at its height, Thomas waited until everyone in the house was asleep. Silently going downstairs, he took his father's shotgun from its rack by the back door, loaded it with shells from a nearby drawer and returned to his room. The agony and struggle would soon be over. In the darkness, with trembling hands, daring not to contemplate his actions, Thomas methodically pulled the icy trigger. As he heard the click, in his mind he imagined the grief-stricken face of his mother and he began to weep.

Then he realized the gun had not fired. Miraculously, the safety lock was still in place. Leaning against the headboard of his bed, Thomas shook.

"Do you believe in gravity?" The voice was undeniably audible.

Thomas knew at once who was speaking. Silently, too exhausted to be frightened, he nodded his head yes.

"You can't see gravity, yet you believe it is there," the voice continued. "It's the same way with my gift of salvation. You can't feel it, but it is accomplished. Accept it as fact and the

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feeling will follow. Now, where are the stars?"

Looking up, Thomas saw the heavens twinkling and shimmering with tiny points of light, never realizing until later that above him was the ceiling of his own room. As he peered at the vast expanse before him, a pinpoint of light caught his attention. Three inches long, the six-sided sphere of neon brilliance slowly descended until it came to rest one foot from Thomas' heaving chest.

Now terrified, Thomas found he could not move. Stifling pains wracked his torso and he suddenly found himself no longer breathing, his heart coldly silent. Released from a cage of flesh, Thomas found himself outside his body. Viewing his once-familiar form sprawled lifelessly on the bed, he knew he had been touched by death. Yet the Bible verses flowed from somewhere within like a torrent. "I am the light of the world. . . . Behold, I stand at the door and knock. . . . If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me."

Thomas watched as the dead form on the bed inched painfully toward the magnetic light that seemed to hold it captive. He felt the great effort that was being exerted as his chest, weighted by the unknown force, fought for freedom. With the last reserve of strength—Thomas knew there was no more—he saw his youthful body graze the edges of the brightness and then fall back onto the bed. During this time Scriptures continued to pour from his mouth.

As suddenly as he had departed, Thomas was back within his body. The excruciating pain in his chest and the sphere of light were gone. The ceiling of his room had returned, and all that remained of the heavenly encounter was a warm sensation and unspeakable joy. Thomas knew his God was real, that the price had been paid and until eternity ended he was free.

Springing from the bed, Thomas wanted to wake the whole household. Surely his parents could no longer deny God's existence. However, his feet refused to touch the floor. Looking down, Thomas saw his toes flat against the cool oak boards, yet he knew he was floating several inches above them. Slapping and pinching himself, Thomas attempted to decipher whether his encounter had been reality or simply a dream. When wakefulness refused to come, he grabbed a small sheet of paper from a desk drawer and from the light of a half-moon shining through the window penciled out the shape of the mysterious light. Folding the paper into a little square, he stuffed it into a grey sock and returned it among the rest. With assurance, he returned to bed and was quickly asleep.

Dawn was barely breaking before Thomas awakened, the night's encounter tantalizingly fresh in his mind. Had it been only a dream? Would his life return to the hell that had stalked it for months? With trembling hands, he opened the drawer that held the evidence. In the grey sock, the same grey sock with a hole in the toe, was the folded piece of paper. On it was the hexagon shape he had drawn the night before. Thomas, "Mental Retard," had undeniably been called by God.

Looking back to that night around our table, I can still feel the divine brokenness and uncompromising devotion that this gentle carpenter had for his Lord. His words were heavy with thanksgiving and reverence, his every thought centered around the Christ of his life. Through a contemporary Damascus road experience, Thomas Bowning found the gusto for which he had been searching. •

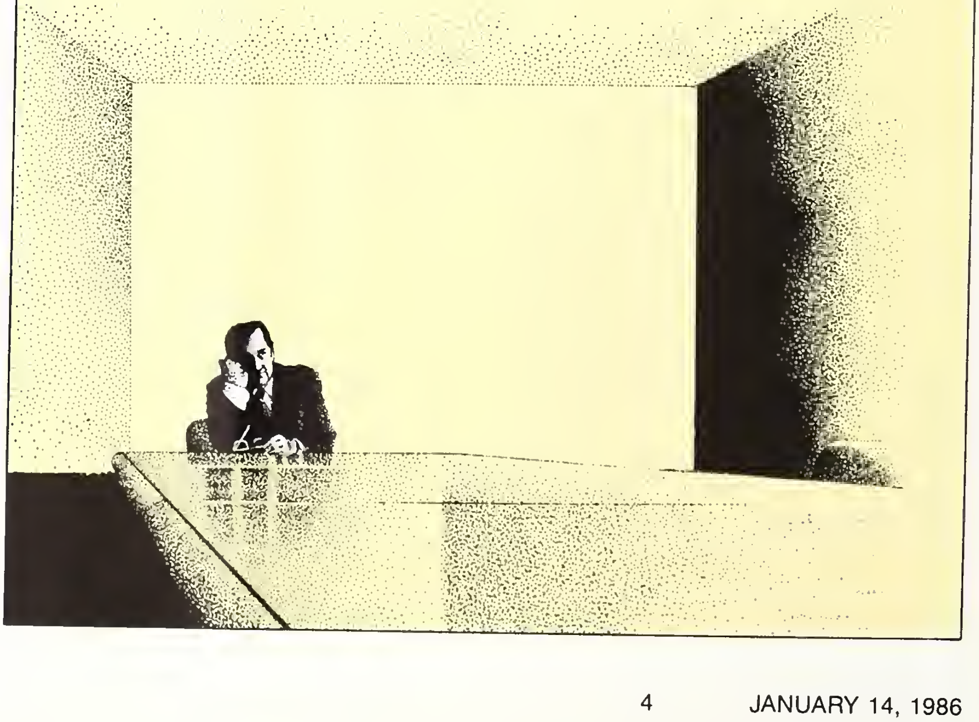
The place of truth

William W. McDermet III

It's a tiny room
about 9 x 9.
There are no pictures
and the air is heavy.
The pink-lady hostess
ushers you in
where the doctor waits.
(He's explained surgery
to so many he could
not tell you the color
of the room.)

It's a tiny room
and it cannot begin
to hold the emotions:
often —
  "We won't know
  until pathology reports."
sometimes —
  "It wasn't malignant,
  she'll be OK."
for us —
  "We couldn't do anything,
  I'm sorry."
We thanked him for being
honest.

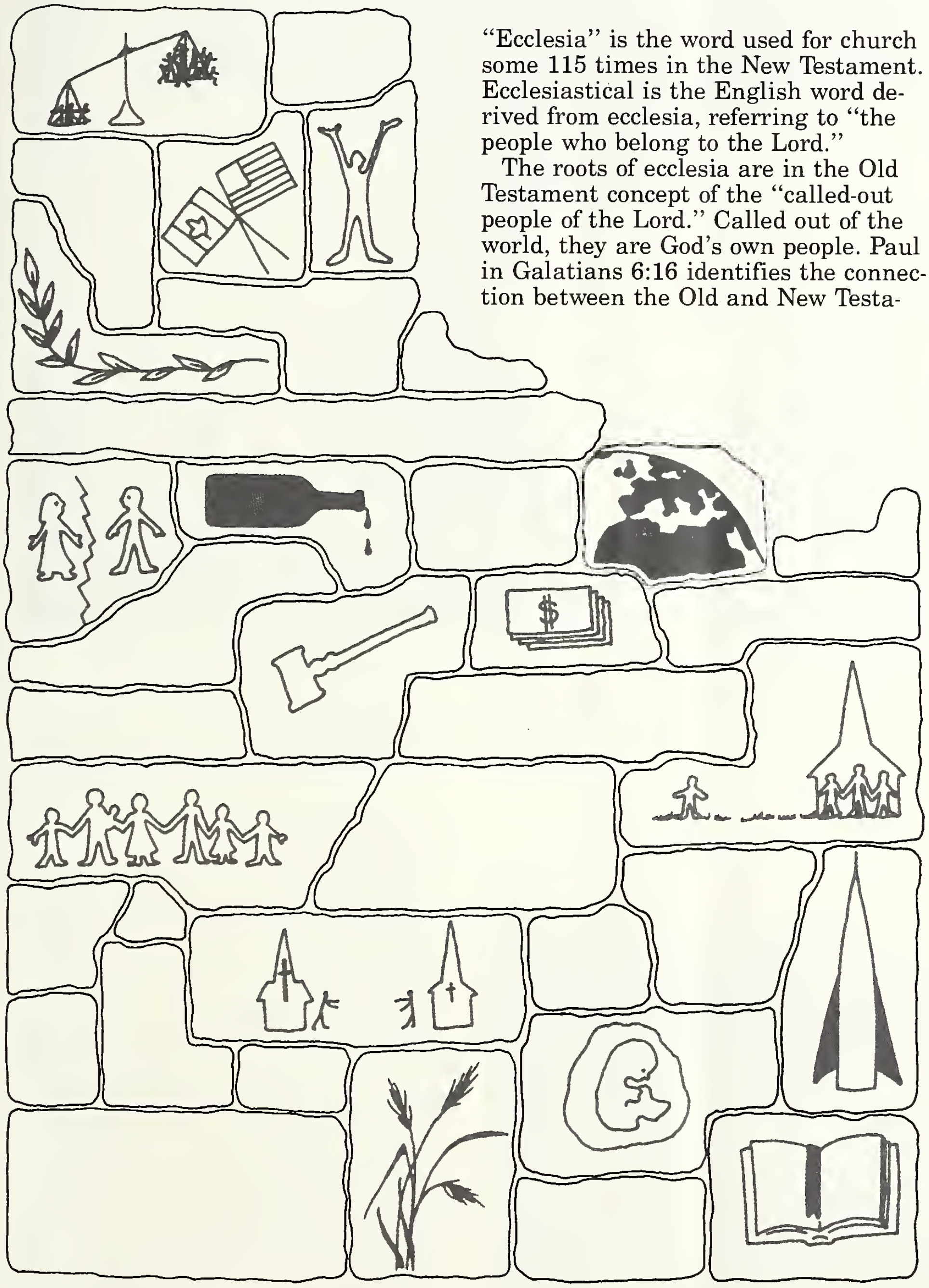
It was long after
we left the tiny room
that I wondered
"Was God there?"
If God can:
  separate water
  roll stones and
  practice resurrection
Then, of course
God was there. Yes!
Amen.



Foundations for our faith-5

We believe in the church

Daniel Zehr



"Ecclesia" is the word used for church some 115 times in the New Testament. Ecclesiastical is the English word derived from ecclesia, referring to "the people who belong to the Lord."

The roots of ecclesia are in the Old Testament concept of the "called-out people of the Lord." Called out of the world, they are God's own people. Paul in Galatians 6:16 identifies the connection between the Old and New Testament concepts of the church by calling it "the Israel of God."

Essentially the difference between the old Israel and the new Israel is that the latter, the church, accepts Jesus as the Messiah and the divine life-giver. The old Israel denies Jesus' divinity and sees him as a threat to the institutions and beliefs of Judaism. As such they condemn him to death. But the death to which Judaism and all unbelieving humankind condemn Jesus becomes the means by which the new life (creation) is released through the resulting resurrection power. Jesus becomes Lord.

The church becomes "God's people" by the *call* (1 Corinthians 1:2), the *life* and *death* (John 10:11; Acts 20:28) and the *resurrected life* (John 10:10; 20:22) of Jesus. It is instructive to note that the "life" Jesus sacrificed on the cross is the "psuche"—soulish/human life (John 10:11), while the "life" he provides in his resurrection is the "zoe"—divine/eternal life (John 10:10). The English translation of both zoe and psuche in John 10:10 and 10:11 respectively as "life" obscures the essential difference between the divine/eternal life given by Jesus in his resurrection and the soulish/human though sinless life which he gave up in his death. The command of Jesus for us to take up our cross calls us to crucify our psuche (soulish/human and in our case sinful life) to be transformed by his resurrection into his zoe (divine/eternal life).

This experience is crucial for our understanding of the nature of the church. As the old Israel practiced adherence to prescribed rituals and actions out of a soulish/human orientation, so the church may imitate that which outwardly appears good and godly without experiencing the controlling reality of the divine/eternal presence of the Holy Spirit. In the absence of Christ's zoe (divine/eternal) we are

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

in reality not the church, and as such we continue to participate in Christ's death instead of allowing that death and resurrection to infuse us with his life-giving Spirit.

With this background on the nature of the church, several key characteristics of the church may be identified.

The church is divine, not human. We do not make the church by our efforts, we receive it as a gift from God. Jesus said to his disciples, "I will build my church." The church is created by God through the resurrected Christ. By his resurrection and Pentecost the "new age" was ushered in and will continue when this present age is gone and time shall be no more. Living in the resurrection life is a gift from God; no person achieves it.

The church is a fellowship of faith, not an institution. It is made up of receivers of—and believers in—Christ. The essential element is the people of faith, not buildings or denominational institutions or any human-made structures. Christians in North America have more of substance in common with their fellow believers in El Salvador or the Soviet Union than they do with unbelievers in their own countries. The nation state is less binding for the Christian than his or her oneness with others who are in Christ.

The church is corporate, not individualistic. One does not collect a hand here, a foot there and an ear somewhere else to form a body. As a hand has no possible existence apart from the body, neither does an individual Christian have any existence apart from the total church, the body of Christ. While faith is personal, it is not individual.

Even in its local existence, the church is universal. A local church is equal to the whole because it possesses not a fragment of Christ but the whole Christ. "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst," says Jesus. Where we meet in Jesus' name, there he is—not just a part of him. This reality draws us into the joy and suffering of Christ's body throughout the world. Our compassion grows out of Christ's compassion. Our suffering grows out of his suffering. Our love grows out of his love. Our new life grows out of his life. Any other source of motivation or action takes us out of being the church. This pours new meaning into the reality of serving "in the name of Christ."

The church is Trans Chaco Mission workers—an outreach ministry of the Paraguay Mennonite churches—(left to right: Abram G. Neufeld, chairman of the board; the superintendent of schools for 15,000 children, here accepting a Bible on behalf of the administration and inviting distribution to all the children; Johann W. Hiebert, director of the mission, and David Schroeder, lay worker) making sure that God's word is available to all the people of Paraguay. The body of Christ exists for the salvation of the whole world.

The church is the living body of Christ, not the perpetuator of his memory or the guardian of a tradition. Unless the Holy Spirit of Christ lives in the church now, the church has no existence, that is, the church is not the church. It is sad but true that much of what passes for the church is a mere perpetuator of Christ's memory without his divine life-giving Spirit. The church is no mummy or lingering memorial of the past. Christ lives now and lives in the church.

As the temple of God and the body of Christ, the church exists not for her own sake, but solely for the glory of God. The central aim of the church is to worship God and to serve him in the world. Church members are those who surrender all they are and have to be used as instruments in God's hands for accomplishing what he wants done in the world.

Consequently the church is not preoccupied with self-preservation but toward the salvation of the world. As Christ's death brought about the saving of the world, so the church has to die to be the instrument of that salvation. In contrast to human structures, which are various forms of cooperative egoisms or the pooling of social/political self-interest, the church is committed to the sacrifice of self, engaged in costly action in Christ's warfare against evil, expecting the day when "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15). All this is accomplished by God in and through his body, the church. Blessing, honor, glory and power be unto him. •

Be imitators of God (Ephesians 5)

Gertrude Roten

The Christian's role in the fulfillment of the plan

Preserving the unity of the Spirit	Christ building up his body	Completely abandoning the old pattern of life	Wholeheartedly espousing the new pattern of life	The new life in purity and light	Family members must live together in mutual submission
4:1 6	7 16	17 24	25 32	5:1 20	5:21 6:9

The Christian's role in fulfilling the plan now takes us to chapter 5: "Be ye imitators of God." Paul has said the old pattern of life must be abandoned. With that must go lying, resentment, stealing, bad language, bad temper, lust.

But how can we copy the essence of God in his works as Creator or Redeemer? Imitation is foreign to the Old Testament. The Hebrew would say to "walk after" or "walk in the ways of." Interestingly, "walk" occurs eight times in the immediate context of being "imitators of God." To imitate God is to fit into God's plan with joy and obedience. John A. T. Robinson states, "The imitation of God in his mercifulness is the characteristic of sonship." Hans Denck has put it for us thus, "No man can truly know Christ unless he follow him in life."

Verses 3-7 lift out sins of conduct, of attitude, of covetousness, and sins of the tongue: foolish talking and jesting. No compromise with the pagan past is acceptable, but rather the giving of thanks. Was it Jonathan Edwards who said, "A God who does not glow in fiery indignation is no God at all"? Warning is pronounced on deceivers with empty words. Do not share or partake of evil with evildoers.

Verses 8-14 is a praise to the victorious power of light. Christ is that light. The light has and will completely change the saints. The saints are daily to learn ("dokimazo" means to put to the test, examine, check credentials, accept as proved) to demonstrate by action what is the will and power of the Lord. Rather than to excommunicate deviating brothers and sisters, the text recommends such a testimony by conduct as will win over the perpetrators of evil. Philips translates verse 11, "Let your life show by contrast how dreary and futile these things are."

It is a walk in love, a walk in light. In verses 20-21 it is a walk to be taken with care . . . a walk in wisdom. "Look therefore carefully" how you walk, redeem the time, understand the will of the Lord. Verses 18-21 put so well what Mennonites call "community," speaking to one another in hymns and spiritual songs. Singing, making melody, giving thanks and, yes, subjecting ourselves to one another in the fear of Christ.

With Christ as example, the author moves rapidly into the home—5:22-6:9. This section is known as the "Haustafeln": the tablets of the house. We are sexual beings in the totality of our relationships. Without the partner of the other sex, our humanity is incomplete. Together we complement one another's social being. Paul begins the Haustafeln with the husband-wife relationship. "Wives be subject to your husbands in all things . . . fear your husbands."

Have you loved someone so deeply that, as you anticipated a meeting, you at the same time loved and feared? To walk beside someone whose love is so unconditional, even unto death, could total submission, fear and respect be adequate as a response?

Husbands . . . love her, love her, love her. Have you seen the face of a woman who has just been told she is loved with an absolute love—that love which leads to a marriage relationship? No wonder that within this framework the lofty bridal song of "Christ and the church" is found. The marriage covenant is grounded solidly and finds its supreme example in the Lord's covenant with his people. Samuel Stone's hymn comes to mind, "From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride. With his own blood he bought her and for her life he died."

A joyful picture of marriage is given. The author moves freely from one to the other—husband and wife, love and subordination in love encounter one another, as do gracious election and joyful fear. The outcome is peace. "With his example." Paul ends the pericope with a quotation from Genesis 2:24, ". . . and they shall become one flesh." *Ninth in a series*

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This parking lot at the Para Todo Church in Paraguay reflects how we humans are often good at keeping our own patterns. Here the old hitching rails for horses were simply lowered as cars replaced buggies. Paul tells us clearly in Ephesians 5 that we are to follow God's *pattern. That is a greater challenge for us.*

When the babies don't come

Name withheld

Bouncing a friend's 4-month-old baby girl on my knee at the church picnic last summer, I heard a voice behind me: "Your turn next, Renee (fictitious name)?"

There it was again: the Question. For a moment I tensed with annoyance but managed to smile sweetly as I turned to the woman to give my standard reply. "Oh, I don't know," I said non-committally. "Is it?"

The Question, as I call it, takes many forms, but all of them hurt. If I so much as pick up a friend's baby, someone is sure to tease, "Isn't it about time you had one, Renee?" or, "Maybe it'll rub off on you, Renee." After the last child dedication service in church it was, "Will you two be up there next year?" and so on.

My husband and I are among the unfortunate minority of married couples with a fertility problem. While most couples spend their reproductive years trying to prevent unplanned pregnancies, 10 percent of us are trying desperately to achieve a pregnancy that just doesn't come. We are infertile.

Medically, a couple must have been attempting for a year or longer to conceive, without success, to be classified as infertile. We have been trying for two.

Naively, Evan (fictitious name) and I assumed that as soon as we stopped using birth control, nature would take its course. When it didn't happen in a month or two, I was mildly disappointed. After three or four months I was annoyed and impatient. The months rolled on to five, six, then on to 12 and longer. By now I was angry, depressed and discouraged.

Others' successes only served to heighten my sense of failure: merely seeing a pregnant woman on the street filled me with resentment; attending baby showers or going to visit a new mother in the hospital maternity ward took on a bittersweet tinge; hearing that yet another friend or family member was expecting sent me into anguished crying sessions.

So many babies are born to people who don't want them. But there are many loving families who cannot have babies. What should our feelings be?

And no one seemed to understand. Well-intentioned but misguided comments such as, "Relax, you're trying too hard" or, "Have you thought of adopting? Then you'll probably get pregnant," only made me feel worse.

Because God is the creator of life, thoughts of the Christian infertile turn naturally to him. "But why?" we agonize. "Are you punishing us for something? Wouldn't we be good parents? Why do you let unmarried teenagers (or abusive parents or people who don't even want children) get pregnant and not us, a happily married couple who'd provide a loving Christian home? It's not fair!"

As I prayed earnestly to find answers, a loving God spoke to me. The more I pondered it, the more I realized I could not blame him for "denying" us a child while selectively "rewarding" others by giving them children. God has ordained the laws of reproduction but has entrusted humankind with the specifics. He cannot be held responsible for every pregnancy that takes place on earth.

Nor can he be blamed for our infertility. I no more believe that God inflicted this condition on us than I believe he inflicts cancer or heart disease on others. Because it is God's will for us as Christians to bring children into the world and raise them for his glory, we can be sure that failure to conceive is not his will. It is simply an imperfection of the physical world that we have to live with. Fair? Perhaps not, but much in life isn't.

God may not have caused our infertility, but apparently at this point he is choosing to use it for some purpose that we cannot see. Already it has become evident that my prayer life, my faith, my patience are all being developed to a degree that they could not without this difficult experience.

Given the miracles that can be wrought in medicine today, it seemed fitting that the Lord would be pleased to give his blessing to our efforts to pursue all reasonable means to achieve natural parenthood. Thus we chose to seek specialized medical help. The ordeal has not been easy: the inconvenience of taking time off work to visit a specialist in another city, tests that range from humiliating to extremely painful, the embarrassment of having to share the most personal part of one's life with a stranger. But I feel it is worth it.

Fortunately, in our case the problem seems to be an easily correctable one, and with current treatment the doctor confidently talks of when, not if I conceive. Now all we can do is wait hopefully and try not to get discouraged.

I still battle envy and resentment when I see a pregnant woman or a mother cradling a newborn in her arms. I still have to endure people's thoughtless comments on our childlessness. My heart still breaks when someone close to me announces she is going to have a baby.

And while I still pray daily for a child to bless our lives, now I also pray that God will continue to help me cope with the situation. My prayers are being heard and answered by a just and loving God. I am confident that God wants us to be parents and that someday we will be.

Let peace begin with me

Helen Johns

Peace—heralded by the prophets, chimed by the heavenly host on Christmas night and sown into the heart of the believer by the Holy Spirit. The theme of peace threads its way through the Bible from beginning to end, from loss of it in the Garden of Eden to its consummation in the Book of Revelation.

Peace is never more often proclaimed than at Christmas. Luke 2:14 rings through the air in songs, it arrives on elaborately decorated cards, it pervades stories of little angels, drummer boys and shepherds on the hillside. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people on whom his favor rests."

To some, peace is only a dream, a fantasy. Certain theologians cast a shadow on Luke 2:14, saying, "People killed the 'Prince of Peace' (Isaiah 9:6) and yet they vainly talk of peace; but there will be none until Christ comes" (Dake, *Annotated Reference Bible*, p. 58). Victims of the greedy, the cruel, the perverse and the godless all cry out, "There is no peace." World events roll on from day to day, seemingly out of control and far removed in time and reality from the chorus that rang so clearly on Christmas night: "and on earth peace. . . ."

In the summer of 1955 another song of peace sounded from a hillside, by 180 teens in the mountains of California. The words they sang were a prayer:

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me. Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be. With God as our Father, children all are we. Let me walk with my brother in perfect harmony. Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now. With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow: To take each moment, and live each moment in peace eternally! Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

The song, written by Sy and Jill Jackson Miller, has since been sung around the world in every conceivable setting: at the Sadat/Begin/Carter signing of the Middle East Peace Treaty, by Pearl Bailey at the United Nations, by choirs of children in Hong Kong, by African Zulus. The list of credits is extensive and impressive. In her autobiography Mrs. Miller says, "God's ideas go forth on wings of love to hearts that love him" (Miller, *Let There Be Peace. . .*, p. 95). The song has taken flight around the world to hearts of those longing for the peace promised by the heavenly host.

The concept—personal responsibility for peace—is not a new one. In the first century Paul urged Christians to be ministers of peace. He used this reasoning: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. . . . All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. . . . We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:17-20). Furthermore, the Ephesian epistle agrees that God's "purpose was to create in himself one new man . . . thus making peace" (Ephesians 2:15-16).

Mrs. Miller explains, " 'Let There Be Peace on Earth' was born in the springtime of 1955. Sy and I were listening to a talk on radio that gave new meaning to the scriptural words, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God' (Matthew 5:9 KJV). Its message emphasized that there can never be a manifest peace on earth until it begins in the heart and practice of the individual . . . the lead sheet lay on our piano for some weeks before its amazing journey around the world" (*Ibid*, pp. 95-96).

In the 30 years since then Mrs. Miller's fervor for peace has not diminished. The words she and her late husband wrote have become a lifestyle. In her book she attests, "We all knew that God guided us in every area of our lives. . . , that of ourselves we could do nothing." In a recent phone conversation she coupled that theme with words of devotion. Repeatedly she emphasized the importance of daily seeking the Lord's will, and her overwhelming, grateful amazement at the way God has honored her offerings of talent and obedience. Little did she know or imagine 30 years ago that God would make something beautiful and dynamic of her life, which had almost ended in suicide.

The angelic music of Christmas needs to continue in the new year. One way for this to happen is to let these words become alive in our lives: "Let there be peace on earth . . . and let it begin with me."

"When I'm asked to explain how the song spread, it is like trying to tell what happens to the circles going out from 75 pebbles thrown simultaneously into a lake. Each pebble gives rise to circles. Each person is like a pebble of peace in the pool of humanity" (*Ibid*, p. 97). She recalls being impressed by the rapidity with which an idea can spread. "Beginning with only one person, an idea can be shared with everyone on earth in 21 days, if one gives it to three others who will do the same" (*Ibid*, p. 94). Think of the possibilities today for spreading the gospel given similar statistics.

Luke 2:14 makes it clear that peace is God's wish for all humanity—peace with God, peace with ourselves, peace with our fellow human beings. Peace did not miraculously drop from the sky that Christmas night. Yet in sending Christ God creatively and abundantly supplied the resources for peace for all who will receive him. Just as Jill and Sy Miller never imagined the impact that their song would have on the world, neither can we imagine the effect we as individuals might have if we "wage peace" in cooperation with God. God has made his will and provision clear for those who pray, "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth . . . and let it begin with me."

Note: Copies of the song "Let there Be Peace on Earth" will be found in The Foundation Series Songbook *to be published early this year. Mrs. Miller, still active in public speaking and peace promotion, can be reached at 260 El Camino Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212.*

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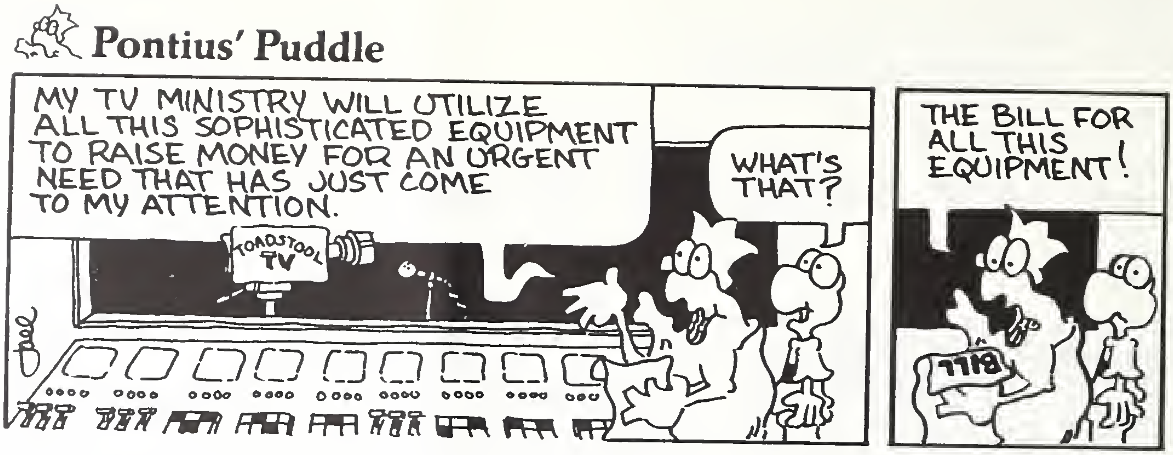
Pontius' Puddle
MY TV MINISTRY WILL UTILIZE ALL THIS SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT TO RAISE MONEY FOR AN URGENT NEED THAT HAS JUST COME TO MY ATTENTION.
WHAT'S THAT?
TOADSTOOL TV
THE BILL FOR ALL THIS EQUIPMENT!
86-2

NEWS

Meet with college presidents

Moderators plan peacemaker team assembly

Denver (Meetinghouse)—In a little over a year from now, Mennonites and Brethren in Christ will know whether the Christian Peacemakers Team idea, first proposed by Ron Sider at the 1984 Mennonite World Conference, will become reality.

The Council of Moderators and Secretaries, meeting here Oct. 24-25, 1985, discussed the proposal with Sider and agreed to hold a special assembly about the future of the Christian Peacemakers Team (CPT) in connection with their next annual meeting Dec. 16-17 in Chicago. The goal of the special assembly is to decide whether or not to give CPT the final go-ahead and, if the green light is given, how to implement the new peacemaking venture.

This was the second time the council, made up of representatives from the Mennonite Brethren Church, the General Conference, the Mennonite Church and the Brethren in Christ Church, had examined the proposal. At last year's consultation CMS received the proposal "with appreciation" but asked MCC Peace Section to give it further study and bring a revised proposal to the 1985 meeting.

Council members were pleased with the new document. "It's moderate and salable," said Owen Alderfer of the Brethren in Christ. The proposal calls for a program, comprised initially of 100-200 two-year volunteers, which would place teams of "well-trained Christians in the midst of warring parties or groups that support warring parties in order to foster shalom." It suggests that Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in North America should take the lead in establishing CPT, anticipating broader ecumenical and international sponsorship.

The proposal also suggests international and domestic settings for possible CPT activity, including Nicaragua, Chile, Laos, Guatemala, Ireland, Belle Glade, Fla., and through Nuclear Weapons Alternative Teams (NWAT)—groups of people who would promote alternatives to nuclear war and military defense through research, action and education. NWAT will focus on the United States, with "a lesser, but very serious, effort in Canada also."

Sider set the tone for CMS's examination of the CPT proposal by saying that while he had "felt called to put the idea out," he had believed "from early on that this was too large and the potential impact too great for just one person."

The council spent much of the session on CPT discussing ways to let the conferences own the peacemaking program.

CMS decided to host the assembly at its 1986 annual meeting. It also agreed to appoint a committee, comprised of representatives from the four groups, CMS, Mennonite World Conference, MCC Peace Section and Ron Sider, which will help the conferences process the material. Suggestions for processing included seminars and study conferences in churches, at annual conventions and in schools.

The discussion about CPT was preceded by what one called a "historic moment"—the first ever meeting between CMS and presidents of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ colleges in Canada and the United States. The moderators and secretaries and the presidents enjoyed a fruitful discussion. "How can we better serve you?" asked Hesston (Kan.) College president Kirk Alliman. "Give us insight and direction. We want to be faithful and obedient to you." Alliman, who also chairs the informal Council of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Colleges, also encouraged CMS to "tell us if we're producing students that don't fulfill the mission of the church."

Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College president Richard Kriegbaum echoed Alliman's request for direction but added that "the church needs to know where it is going. How can we serve a divided church?"

James Lapp said, "We need to acknowledge that the destiny of our denominations lies with our schools." The moderators and secretaries and the college presidents plan to meet together again in 1987.

In other business CMS agreed to send a message from the North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches to West German Mennonite congregations to mark their Peace Sunday celebrations in the fall. The message says, in part, "We need to support and help each other in discovering what it means in our world to be Christian peacemakers" and that it is "urgent that we be open to God's Spirit as to how we should be faithful in peacemaking." *John Longhurst*

Krystle Carrington of "Dynasty" is an average American woman, and her living room is an average American living room—at least to citizens of East Germany. Dealing with that stereotype was only one of the new experiences that awaited 25 Goshen (Ind.) College students and their faculty leaders this summer when they spent eight weeks at an East German university. Gerhard Reimer, Goshen College professor of German, who led the group, found that the popular American TV shows "Dynasty" and "Dallas" are shaping the East German image of the United States.

Brazil is the world's fourth largest user of pesticides, dumping 105,000 tonnes on its fields each year. The dangerous effects of this often indiscriminate use of chemicals have been proven by a recent study, which showed that nearly all of the commonly eaten foods in the country are seriously contaminated. Researchers found pesticide residues above tolerable levels in 81 percent of butter samples, 93 percent of sausages, 63 percent of ham, 100 percent of sunflower oil and 100 percent of corn oil.

A group of students at a junior high school in Tokyo, Japan, recently sent a personal plea to President Reagan to stop pressing Japan to buy more American cigarettes. "The smokers have decreased a lot in the United States. The president himself supports non-smoking education. We thought your nation was a good example. Then why do you push us to buy cigarettes? Are you encouraging young people to smoke?" the plea read in part.

Mennonite farmers tackle concerns at second conference

Mt. Pleasant, Pa. (Meetinghouse)—Nearly 140 farmers found hope amid the darkness of the current agricultural crisis during the second Faith and Farming Conference Dec. 4-6 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center here. They came from throughout North America and represented a variety of Mennonite and related denominations.

Tears mixed with laughter as the farmers shared stories of pain and hardship and enjoyed good fun and fellowship. Several of the participants had already lost their farms or were going through bankruptcy proceedings.

Last year's conference, with a slightly larger attendance, raised awareness in the church about the plight of the farmers and launched a variety of efforts to help meet their needs.

This year's event was more reflective, with the farmers helping each other see that they can learn from their hardships and that good things can come out of bad times.

They talked about the need for some farmers to change vocations, even while promoting farming as a "way of life" and even a "right."

"Yes, there is life after farming," said Nancy Kinsinger Halder of Parnell, Iowa. She and her husband recently lost their farm and are looking for other work.

While acknowledging the pain of her family's experience, Halder said it was not as emotionally trying for them as for others because they are still relatively young and got into farming after pursuing other careers. The Halders have also been open with their congregation about their troubles and have received much help and support from the members.

Halder said it helps to get involved in helping other struggling farmers. She and her husband operate Mennonite Central Committee's Farm Crisis Hotline out of their home.

Nancy Kinsinger Halder tells participants at Faith and Farming II about her family's experience of losing the farm to creditors recently in Iowa.

In a well-received address on "Hope and Vision," Iowa farm leaders Don and Karen Gingerich called on Mennonite farmers to "reinvent agriculture" by using creative new ways to earn a living on the farm. Farmers will need to learn to be less independent and less self-reliant, they said. "We must support each other as never before," Karen said. "Let us be light in the world of agriculture."

Warmth and humor pervaded the conference, and the tone was set by Bible study leader James Myer and main speaker Conrad Wetzel. Myer is a Lititz, Pa., pastor and moderator of the Church of the Brethren. Wetzel is a trained psychologist and leader at Plow Creek Fellowship—a rural Mennonite intentional community near Tiskilwa, Ill.

Stress in the farm family and in the farming business was the topic of two addresses by Wetzel. The other topic of the conference, presented by a five-member panel, was "The Christian Farmer and Government." In addition, John Rudy of Mennonite Foundation gave a presentation on bankruptcy.

In a report by the nine-member Laurelville Continuing Committee appointed during last year's conference, chairman Wilmer Heisey said, "A tremendous amount of volunteerism and a whole range of gifts and ministries have been unleashed" in the Mennonite farm community during the last year.

Some of the outgrowths of last year's conference, the committee said, were the Farm Crisis Hotline, support groups in numerous farm communities, an MCC-appointed Farm Issues Task Force, a farm newsletter and the inter-Mennonite Agriculture Day at the Ames '85 convention of the Mennonite Church.

The farmer-dominated continuing committee, several of whose members are also part of the MCC task force, also noted that the General Assembly delegates at Ames '85 called on three inter-Mennonite organizations—MCC, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Economic Development Associates—to work vigorously together on farm concerns.

As the conference closed, Joanne Hershey of Kinzers, Pa., made an eloquent plea for more attention to the needs of farm families, especially farm women. "We women are hurting in a way that no one quite realizes," she said. "People tend to blame the farm family for getting themselves into financial trouble instead of offering encouragement."

Jay Garber, an ex-farmer and Lancaster Conference leader who served as co-moderator of the conference, noted how Job in the Old Testament complained about the long-winded speeches and advice of his so-called friends. Job, a troubled farmer himself, lashed out at his "miserable comforters" and said what he needed most was encouragement. *Steve Shenk*

Violations of human rights in Afghanistan seem intended to break the spirit of an independent people and destroy family structures, a UN report concluded Dec. 2. The Soviet-backed government's policies, the report added, include indiscriminate killings, mutilations, torture and forced evacuations.

The Mennonite Collegiate Graduate Society (MCI alumni) will sponsor an Alumni Benefit Concert on Sunday, Jan. 26 at 3 p.m. at the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. Performers will include the MCI Staff Singing Ensemble, Ernest Ens on guitar and Anna Schaefer on flute in a varied program of sacred, classical and jazz music. Though there is no admission charge, a collection will be taken. Proceeds will go toward MCI alumni projects.

Lack of transportation to worship services and lack of access to the church building itself are only two of the obstacles facing people with disabilities in the church today, a recent Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes survey found. Some disabled people are unable to participate fully in services because of their condition. Some disabled members show reluctance to get involved in church activities because of their disability. When asked what assistance would be most helpful in disabilities ministries, most respondents mentioned the need for more information and resource materials.

Bethel College offers free tuition to retraining farmers

North Newton, Kan. (BC)—For the 1986-87 school year farmers who are forced to leave the farm for financial reasons will be eligible for a full year of free college-credit courses at Bethel College here.

At the September 1985 meetings of the 36-member board, the deepening farm crisis was identified as the number one priority and concern of the college. Much support, both in finances and in enrollment, comes from farm communities. President Schultz, in his 15th year at the college, declared that "it is important that the college continue to be a partner, a concerned partner, with our farm families in sickness and in health, in good times and in bad times." The college board took the following action: "Because we feel a deep concern for the emotional, physical and spiritual welfare of people who are in severe financial difficulty, we go on record as identifying with and supporting the Mennonite Central Committee Farm Crisis Committee and ask the executive committee of the board to consider sending a representative to this committee. Additionally the executive committee of the board is asked to study ways in which Bethel College can relate to the farm crisis through tuition-free retraining programs for those forced to leave the farm."

In December 1985 the administration recommended to the board the following rationale and proposal to assist farmers in retraining and retooling for other vocations:

"1. Mutual aid in times of special need is in the Bethel and Mennonite tradition. The current special need in our constituency is the deepening farm crisis and ways to assist those who cannot continue on the farm.

"2. Bethel is church-related and also farm-related. Over 2,000 Bethel alumni are in agricultural occupations.

"3. Bethel is primarily an educational institution. Its support for the farm crisis comes primarily through its area of strength, education. For those forced to leave the farm for financial reasons, retooling or retraining for another vocation is an option some may wish to consider. This is where Bethel is in a position to help.

"Therefore, Bethel offers for the 1986-87 school year two semesters of tuition-free education to those who qualify under the following guidelines: (1) Persons age 25 or older living on a farm who have abandoned farming within the past two years as their primary vocation. (2) The normal application process will be followed, including the $10 application fee. Those admitted will be required to apply for whatever federal, state or congregational aid might be available to them (excluding loans). Bethel will cover the difference in tuition costs. (3) A designated member of the faculty or administration will direct this program to assist applicants in career counseling and course selection."

The college, on the eve of celebrating its centennial as the oldest of the 10 Mennonite colleges in North America, has a special identity with the farming community. The founders of Bethel College were the German immigrants from Russia who brought with them their hardy Turkey Red Wheat, which helped make the prairies the breadbasket of the nation.

President Schultz added that "mutual aid in such times is important at Bethel. We are not a bank. We do not have money to loan, but we do have 30 programs available to permit farmers, male and female, to retool and make a career change. Bethel College wishes to offer what we do best—provide career preparation and lifelong liberal arts education—to farmers who choose to leave the farm for alternative careers."

Emerson Wiens, chairman of the industrial arts department, will direct this program and will assist applicants in career counseling and course selection.

Teacher needed in Taiwan

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church is looking for a grade-school teacher to teach missionary children in Hwalien, Taiwan. A voluntary service term of two to three years including language study, beginning in August, is recommended.

Please contact:
Personnel Office
Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

Part-time pastor needed

Philippi Mennonite Church, a small ministry-oriented fellowship in rural West Virginia, seeks a part-time pastor, effective immediately.

Duties include sharing spiritual leadership, representing the church to the community, and counseling.

Qualifications: seminary training preferred; biblical studies background acceptable. Housing and a **small** stipend provided; supplemental income will be necessary.

For further information contact:
Lois Harder
Work: (304) 457-1700, ext. 240
Home: (304) 457-2506

Elvin Kreider
Work: (304) 457-2800
Home: (304) 457-2987.

The former moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) has called for the creation of a peace army committed to withholding the 13 percent of income taxes that the British government spends on defense. Lord MacLeod of Funiary hopes such an army will be able to persuade the government to allow people to give an equivalent amount of their taxes to relieve world hunger instead. Even if the government refuses to go along with the idea, he said, taxpayers should still withhold the money and give it to famine relief.

Some 30,000 children of prisoners received Christmas gifts in 1985 through an outreach program conducted in 200 American cities. Project Angel Tree was coordinated by Prison Fellowship Ministries, whose volunteers investigated the needs of families of prisoners with whom they had contact. Christmas trees were set up in public locations with the names and gift wishes of the children of prisoners listed on paper angels. Shoppers selected an angel and purchased the gifts, which were later distributed to the families.

Churches and other private emergency food centers are feeding more hungry people in the United States due to lack of adequate funding for federal food programs, according to a new report released in October 1985. The report, "Unfed America '85," uses data collected by volunteers in 36 areas across the country. The report was released by Bread for the World Educational Fund, a Christian educational service on poverty and hunger.

Seventeen participate in learning tour to Philippines

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Current North American press reports indicate that the Philippines is a place where murder, political corruption and violent clashes between the government and the people are a way of life.

For one group of North Americans, however, the Philippines has become much more personal than mere ink and newsprint, and a place where hope flourishes along with suffering.

Seventeen people from the United States and Canada, representing Mennonite and Lutheran churches and a Friends Meeting, participated in Mennonite Central Committee's Learning Tour to the Philippines Oct. 5-24, 1985.

"I have visited many countries at war and many refugee camps," said Norman Shenk, tour participant and MCC executive committee member. "I have never seen as much economic exploitation and dislocation. This has hit me more than any visit I have made."

Following two days of orientation in the capital city of Manila, the group traveled to the southern island of Mindanao. There they met people profoundly affected by the uncertain economic and political climate.

In Cagayan de Oro City the group met Romy and Linda Tiongco, friends of MCC workers who do community organizing with Christian and Moslem farmers and women's groups in Mindanao. Romy Tiongco spoke about "empowerment"—the building up of people's self-confidence so they can better their own lives and futures. "It's easy to get angry and take up arms, but it is a much harder and longer process to empower people," Romy said.

These words provided a backdrop for much of what the group encountered in Mindanao. The region has been rocked by violent confrontations between government forces and the New People's Army (NPA), the military wing of the Communist Party in the Philippines.

Learning Tour participants walk back into the mountains in Bukidnon province for an "overnight exposure" with peasant farmer families.

In Bukidnon province, where MCC country directors Dan and Esther Epp-Tiessen are located, several tour members walked back into the mountains to spend a night with peasant farmer families. Some of the hosts were men whom the military had accused of an NPA-committed murder and had jailed for several months. The Epp-Tiessens were instrumental in helping the farmers get out of prison on bail.

The entire group spent several days in Davao City, home of the Filipina woman guide for the tour. Davao City has large urban poor communities and many labor unions among the fruit plantations and other industries. It is also a hub of NPA activities, which means there is a large, visible military presence there as well.

MCC workers Jan Lugibihl and Brenda Stoltzfus live in Olongapo. They listen to the stories of women in the bars, many of whom come from poor provinces and have no other way to make a living for their families back home. The Learning Tour group had a chance to meet three of the women who are friends of Lugibihl and Stoltzfus. This was one of the more emotional times of the trip as the women openly shared their feelings and life experiences with the group.

The group returned to Manila for the conclusion of the tour. The four days there included a trip to Smoky Mountain, a mammoth garbage heap where scores of squatters live, scraping food, clothing and shelter from the castoffs of the more fortunate.

Gay Freeman, a teacher from Denver, said, "Smoky Mountain made the situation in the Philippines more concrete for me. I felt it with my feet. I sank down into the reality."

The tour was organized by Dorothy Friesen of Chicago and Don Goertzen, an MCC worker in Butuan City. They were assisted by other members and friends of the MCC Philippines team. Friesen and her husband, Gene Stoltzfus, served with MCC in the Philippines between 1976 and 1979.

In the evaluation and summary period at the end of the tour, participants expressed their feelings about the injustice, poverty and suffering they had seen and the pain they had shared with people along the way. Many expressed appreciation for their Filipina companion from Davao City who had become a friend. Most would echo one tour member's prayer: "I'm angry and confused. Lord, help me to channel that energy."

Tour members also recognized that along with the agony, the people they met had shared a great deal of love and hope and an unshakable faith in God. Both Filipinos and MCC workers show their hope in the promise of God's kingdom by the way they are working to make the kingdom reality.

At the end of the tour, the participants brainstormed about concrete ways to "channel that energy" back home in North America. *Melanie Zuercher*

A Friendship Evangelism seminar was held Nov. 1-2, 1985, at Grace Mennonite Church in Brandon, Man. Don Yoder of the Commission on Home Ministries was the guest speaker. Five other churches were represented at the seminar, which 44 people attended. Yoder said, "Evangelism is more than seeking disciples. It is using the Master's plan for making disciples."

To explore the current revival atmosphere in evangelical and mainline Protestant churches, a conference entitled "Church Growth and the Third Wave: Supernatural Healing in the Local Church and Managing the Consequences of Signs and Wonders in the Local Church" will be held May 27-29 in Orlando, Fla. For more information contact the conference coordinator at Leadership for Ministry, 1608 Nogales St., Suite #121, Rowland Heights, CA 91748, (714) 861-5253.

The Native Gardening Project is a program that Mennonite Central Committee can't advertise too loudly in Canada's native communities. The reason: there are far more communities willing to accept resident summer gardeners than there are people willing to go to work on Indian reserves. In 1985, 18 volunteer gardeners were placed in nine communities stretching from the Yukon to Bearskin Lake in northwestern Ontario. Those interested in applying for a summer gardening position may contact Eric Rempel at MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8.

Wiebes resign positions to start new church in Denver

Newton, Kan. (WDC, GCMC)—Leonard Wiebe, pastor at Faith Mennonite Church here, and Joan Banman Wiebe, Women in Mission coordinator, have resigned their positions effective late summer to accept a call to start a new church in the southeast area of metropolitan Denver.

Leonard Wiebe will have served Faith Church 12 years. During that time he also served the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference as secretary for church planting on a part-time basis for three years. He is chairperson of the evangelism and church planting reference council of CHM.

During Joan Wiebe's nine-year term as WM coordinator, the 10,000-member organization has undergone significant changes. "Earlier," she says, "a lot of our work was supplying material aid. More recently . . . we have added television awareness, mission education materials, seminary scholarships, continuing education grants and parenting for peace and justice to our list of involvements."

Leonard is pleased that he can work directly at planting a church on an inter-Mennonite basis. "The opportunities for church planting today are greater than ever before," he says.

The call for this new work was made cooperatively by the Denver Area Mennonite Mission Commission (an organization of the four GC and MC churches in the Denver area), the home mission committee of the Western District Conference, and the evangelism and church development commission of the Rocky Mountain Mennonite Conference.

The vision of the Wiebes and the supporting groups is to call forth a worshiping, serving congregation. This church will participate in the larger witness of the Mennonite churches of the area and will become affiliated with both the RMMC and the WDC.

The idea of a new congregation in the southeast area of Denver has been developing for a number of years. This is an area with a large increase in population and an area to which Mennonites have been moving over the years. Thus the vision is for a new church to begin with a core of interested families that will reach out to incorporate people in the area who resonate with an Anabaptist interpretation of the gospel, and people who can be led to make a commitment to accept and follow Christ.

Mennonite workers help plan Botswana youth fest

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Two hundred young people marching through Botswana's rural town of Mahalapye was a first. This was not a protest demonstration in strife-torn southern Africa but a celebration of faith. The young singing marchers in colorful uniforms represented more than 20 African Spiritual Church groups, often referred to as African Independent Churches. They had gathered for "Bopaganang '85," the first interchurch youth festival of its kind.

The September 1985 weekend was filled with choirs and musical groups, question-and-answer sessions, a vigorous Bible-knowledge quiz, a late-night musical event, the Sunday morning procession and a tree-planting ceremony in the public square. Samuel A. Mohono of Lesotho was speaker and resource person. Botswana's Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Kgabo, opened the gathering at a church center of the Spiritual Healing Church.

Mennonite Ministries personnel (Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee workers) assisted national church leaders with planning and arrangements. Missionary Jonathan Larson writes, "The youth festival is now history. It was a miracle that it happened at all. When it was all over we were a little breathless. I suppose that this is the start of something which will become a significant element in the Spiritual Church scene, a rare meeting ground for those who are going to lead these churches in the next decade."

"Write a love letter to your congregation," suggested Roger Knight, key speaker at a Small Church Conference in Salina, Kan., at the end of September 1985. Mennonites joined local United Methodists, Presbyterians and the United Church of Christ in planning the conference. Presenters included David Habegger, Leland Harder and Lois Barrett. Workshop topics were "Living in the Small Town Fishbowl," "Worship Resources," "The Church and the Farm Crisis" and "Alternatives for Education."

Katie Funk Wiebe, writer, speaker and teacher of English at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan., wrote and recorded a four-part series of programs which were released Nov. 11-Dec. 6. The themes were "Daily Problems Need Daily Faith," "Risk to Grow," "Growing Up After You're Grown Up" and "Help for Your Dreams." For a free copy of Wiebe's talks, write to Media Ministries, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-2497.

When the evangelism and church planting reference council heard that the General Board had decided to pray every Friday for the renewal of the General Conference, its members agreed to do the same. Members will pray each Friday for the development plan and for church planting plans for the next 10 years.

RECORD

CALENDAR

Jan. 29-Feb. 2—MCC annual meeting, Denver

Jan. 30—MCC U.S. annual meeting, Denver

Feb. 7-8—Mennonite Disaster Service All-Unit meeting, Winnipeg

Feb. 28-March 4—Council of Commissions, Newton, Kan.

March 9—World Mission Sunday

April 8-11—Congress on Urban Ministry, Chicago

May 15-18—Festival of Worship, Goshen, Ind.

July 21-27—General Conference Triennial Sessions, Saskatoon, theme: "Thy Kingdom Come"

Sept. 25-28—Aid to Christian Teaching, Whiting, N.J.

Canada

Jan. 16-18—MCC Canada annual meeting, Vancouver

Feb. 6-8—Canadian Council of Boards, Winnipeg

Feb. 21-22—Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, Carman

Feb. 21-23—Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, Abbotsford

Feb. 28-March 1—Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan, Waldheim

March 14-16—Conference of Mennonites in Ontario, Waterloo

March 21-23—Conference of Mennonites in Alberta

July 4-8—Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Waterloo, Ont.

Central

April 3-5—Central District Conference, Washington, Ill.

Eastern

May 1-4—Eastern District Conference, Bedminster, Pa.

Northern

June 12-15—Northern District Conference, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Pacific

June 19-22—Pacific District Conference, Aurora, Ore.

Western

March 21-22—Kansas Mennonite Renewal Service meetings, Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Church

Oct. 17-19—Western District Conference, central Kansas

MINISTERS

Gary Daught resigned as pastor at Disciples Fellowship, Duluth, Minn., in December 1985.

David Hall resigned as associate pastor at Grantham (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church. He will be pastor at First Church, McPherson, Kan., effective Aug. 1.

Don Heiser resigned as pastor at Willow Springs (Ill.) Church to become pastor at Maplewood Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., both effective in April.

John Heyerly resigned as pastor at Houston Church effective in June.

Keith Jescke resigned as pastor at Swiss Church, Alsen, N.D., in December 1985.

David Ortis will become pastor at Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, B.C., this summer.

Kenneth Peterson resigned as pastor at First Church, Upland, Calif., to become pastor at Calvary Church, Aurora, Ore., effective in early summer.

Perry Rotenberger became assistant pastor at First Church, Aberdeen, Idaho, this month.

Bruce Wiebe was ordained to the ministry Nov. 17, 1985, at Foothills Church, Calgary, where he is the youth minister.

Leonard Wiebe resigned as pastor at Faith Church, Newton, Kan., effective July 31 to become church planter-pastor in Denver in late summer.

Arthur Wiens resigned as pastor at Ebenfeld Church, Herschel, Sask.

Richard Ziemer, interim pastor at Eden Church, Schwenksville, Pa., has accepted a permanent pastorate there.

WORKERS

Lois Braun, Winnipeg, Man., begins a voluntary service term under Commission on Overseas Mission/Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in January. She will be working with Lycee Miodi, a girl's secondary school in Nyanga, Zaire.

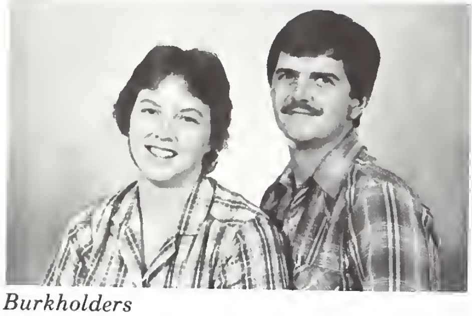
Glenn and *Mary Burkholder*, Stuarts Draft (Va.) Church and Warden (Wash.) Church, respectively, began three-year Mennonite Central Committee terms in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Glenn is working as regional coordinator and agricultural extensionist and Mary is a teacher and nutritionist. He received an associate degree in production agriculture from Hesston (Kan.) College. She received a bachelor's degree in vocational home economics education from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. Glenn's parents are the Lyle S. Burkholders of Waynesboro, Va. Mary's parents are the John M. Unruhs of Warden.

Denise Buuck, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Mercer Island, Wash., began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term as a chore service supervisor at Freemont Public Association in Seattle. She is a graduate of Concordia Lutheran College in Ann Arbor, Mich. Her parents are Herbert and Elnore Buuck.

Camp Assiniboia, near Winnipeg, was the location for Manitoba's 10th annual deacons' retreat, which was held Nov. 8-10, 1985. Sixty-four adults and 24 children participated in the weekend retreat. Ernie Isaac, pastoral counselor at Eden Mental Health Center in Winkler, Man., spoke on the theme "Deacons in a Caring Congregation."

At the Oct. 30, 1985, meeting of the Accrediting Commission of the American Association of Bible Colleges held at Arlington Heights, Ill., Columbia Bible Institute, Clearbrook, B.C., was given candidate status for accreditation. AABC has over 100 member colleges representing about 35,000 students in North America. CBI students will now receive even greater credit transfer of work taken at the school in institutions like the University of Waterloo, Trinity Western University and Christian colleges in Canada and the United States.

"Spirituality and Social Justice: an Essential Relationship for Urban Ministry" is the theme for the fifth national Congress on Urban Ministry, to be held April 8-11 in Chicago. Plenary speakers include Walter Brueggemann, George Clements, Murphy Davis, Vincent Harding, Alvaro Nieves, Tom Sine, Barbara Williams-Skinner and Jeremiah Wright. They will address the subthemes "Blessed Are the Poor," "Blessed Are Those Who Hunger After Righteousness" and "Blessed Are the Peacemakers." Contact SCUPE, 30 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60610, (312) 944-2153.


Burkholders

Coffey

Epp

Fast

Funk

Buuck

Campbell

Cornelsens

Katrina Campbell, First United Presbyterian Church, Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, began a two-year MVS term as an art therapy assistant at Edgewood Children's Center in St. Louis. She received a bachelor's degree in art from Whitworth College, Spokane, Wash. Her parents are William Campbell, Shalimar, Fla., and Catherine Ryen, Spokane.

John Coffey, St. Petersburg (Fla.) Friends Meeting, began a two-year MVS term as an intake caseworker at the Free Store in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is a graduate of Guilford College and the Earlham School of Religion. His parents are Evelyn and William Coffey of Zephyrhills, Fla.

Edward Cornelson, a teacher at Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Man., is heading up a new ministry-to-agriculture program. It is being developed out of the peace and social concerns committee of MCC Manitoba. It is a two-year term on a voluntary service basis.

Dori and *Rick Cornelsen*, Sherbrooke Church, Vancouver, began two-year MCC terms in Nain, Labrador, working as community youth workers. Dori received a bachelor's degree in anthropology and Rick received a bachelor's degree in sociology, both from the University of Winnipeg. Her parents are Ben and Esther Zerbe of Minneapolis. His are Erwin and Hildur Cornelsen of Vancouver.

Bill Epp, Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Man., began a two-year MCC term in Saskatoon as a supervisory assistant at the Saskatoon Food Bank. His parents are Ed and Katie Epp of Rosthern.

Loretta Fast, First Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., began an MCC term in Sudan, working as a community health nurse with the Eastern Sudan Refugee Program. She received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Goshen (Ind.) College. Her parents are the Peter A. Fasts of Mountain Lake.

Bonita and *John Friesen*, Rosthern (Sask.) Church, began three-year MCC terms in Bangladesh. John is a livestock specialist and Bonita is a women's adviser in the Rural Savings Program. John received a diploma in

Summer service opportunities

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church is accepting applications from young people interested in the overseas summer missions program. Volunteers are responsible to obtain their own financial support. COM will make all other arrangements.

For further information, contact:
Personnel Office
Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

"The apartheid system has been implemented so successfully in South Africa that some whites are amazed when you take them into a black community and show them what is happening there," said Athol Jennings, a white South African Methodist minister who believes the system of racial segregation practiced in his country is fundamentally wrong and who is committed to resisting it through nonviolent means. He recently visited churches and campuses in British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario as part of a tour sponsored in part by Mennonite Central Committee.

The annual MCC Washington Seminar is scheduled for Feb. 23-25 on Capitol Hill. Sessions will be held at the Pentagon, in Senate office buildings and at MCC's location on Capitol Hill and will include a range of government and private agency resource persons on current international and domestic issues. Anyone interested in attending may request a registration form from Richard Blackburn, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148, (312) 627-5310. The official application deadline is Jan. 31.

The Mennonite bicentennial celebration will move to Toronto's Harbourfront Aug. 2-4. For the up to 25,000 people expected there for Simcoe Day Weekend it will be an opportunity to learn about Mennonite faith and culture. Plans include a film festival, drama, storytelling, exhibits of arts and crafts, and food with a Dutch and Swiss Mennonite flavor.

RECORD

Friesens

Goerings

Heinrichs

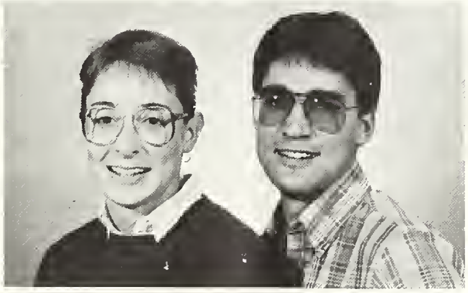
Neufeld

agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Bonita received a bachelor's degree in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. His parents are Henry and Helen Friesen, and hers are Homer and Gredi Janzen, all of Rosthern.

John Funk, United Church of Christ, Kohler, Wis., began a two-year MVS term as a counselor at the Downtown Emergency Service Center in Seattle. He received a degree in history from the University of Wisconsin. His parents are Glenn and Mary Funk.

Eldon and *Eunice Gerbrandt*, Wildwood Church, Saskatoon, began two-year MCC terms at Akron, Pa. Eldon is working in maintenance, and Eunice is the hostess, both at MCC headquarters. They have four children, Duncan, Holly, Sheldon and Anna.

Roy and *Sheralyn Wolfe Goering*, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., and Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, respectively, began two-year MVS terms as child-care workers at the Friendship Day Care Center in Hutchinson, Kan. His parents are Dorothy and Homer Goering. Hers are Martha and Willard Wolfe.



Goertzens

Judy and *Tim Goertzen*, Southern Hills Church, Topeka, Kan., and Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., respectively, began three-year MCC terms in Burkina Faso. Tim is working in water resource and agricultural development and Judy in health and nutrition. Judy received a bachelor's degree in social work and home economics, and Tim received a bachelor's degree in business administration, both from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. Her parents are Jack and Elizabeth Unruh of Topeka. His are Milton and Linda Goertzen of Goessel.

John and *Betty Grasse*, Ephrata, Pa., will begin a term of service in the spring under COM/AIMM as medical workers in the Kalonda/Tshikapa area of Zaire.

Marcus Heinrichs, West Abbotsford Church, Clearbrook, B.C., began a two-year MCC term at Akron, Pa., working as a printer at MCC headquarters. His parents are Alfred and Ann Heinrichs of Clearbrook.

Marjorie and *Roland Krause*, Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, Kan., began two-year MCC terms in Ephrata, Pa., where he is a family physician and she is a clerk in the SELFHELP Crafts store. Their children are Peter, David, Judy and Mark.

Christine Neufeld, Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., began an 18-month MVS term as an arts and crafts director for Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno, Calif. She received a degree in art education from Bluffton (Ohio) College. Her parents are Frieda and Walter Neufeld of Ransom, Kan.

Elizabeth and *Steve Pankratz*, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., began five-month MCC terms in Mexico. He is an earthquake relief coordinator and she is an assistant. She received a bachelor's degree in education and music and he received a bachelor's degree in business administration, both from Bluffton (Ohio) College. Their children are Rachel, Lisa and Matthew. His mother is Mabel Pankratz of Mesa, Ariz. Her father is Howard Raid of Bluffton.

film

Redemption story

The Color Purple, *directed by Steven Spielberg, written by Menno Meyjes, produced by Steven Spielberg, Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall, Quincy Jones*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, assistant editor

The Color Purple begins innocently, with two young girls playing happily in a field. Then their father, a dark, brooding figure, calls them to supper. He tells the older girl, Celie, that she's ugly. In the next scene, Celie gives birth to a girl on a cold winter night, and the father, who is also the baby's father, takes the newborn away.

Thus begins this drama of salvation in the rural south in the first third of this century. Thus begins a battle between the virtues of love and joy and the forces of hatred and sorrow. We witness Celie's tragic loss of hope, then see it slowly reborn.

This powerful film, based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Alice Walker, unfolds a parable of the gospel. God's love, manifested through some unlikely characters, breaks through terrible circumstances to bring redemption not only to Celie (Whoopi Goldberg) but to her wider family. Although the story might be labeled man-hating, even Albert (Danny Glover), Celie's husband, who beats her, becomes a tragic character who in the end performs a loving act.

Steven Spielberg has finally departed from his usual adventure or horror genre geared for younger teenagers to make a realistic drama. He brings suspense out of apparently ordinary situations. He injects humor into a story that was perhaps too dour originally. And he moves from one scene to another so creatively that we sit in wonder at how well and how often he pulls it off.

The Color Purple is the most compelling and best-made film I've seen in several years. It can move one to tears of sorrow and of joy. The acting is excellent. As in *A Soldier's Story*, we see how many fine black actors aren't getting much work elsewhere. The music by Quincy Jones is delightful.

Note: The film contains language that may offend some viewers.

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Loves lost

Out of Africa, *produced and directed by Sydney Pollack, written by Kurt Leudtke*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser

In 1913 Karen Dinesen, a wealthy Dane, married Swedish Baron Bror Blixen, whom she did not love, and went to live on a farm at the foot of the Ngong Hills in East Africa. There she fell in love with Africa and with a free spirit named Denys Finch Hatton. Eventually she lost them both.

Out of Africa is based on the story of this remarkable woman who wrote beguiling stories under the name Isak Dinesen about the 17 years she spent in Africa. It is a love story on two levels. The film concentrates on the affair between Karen (Meryl Streep) and Denys (Robert Redford). The book *Out of Africa* says almost nothing about this. Instead it reveals her love for Africa, the land and its people, which she depicts in beautiful, detailed prose. The film doesn't neglect this love affair with the "dark continent." Lush scenes of the landscapes, the horizons, the wild animals, fill the screen. These scenes show us the attachment Dinesen felt to the land.

The major flaw of the film is the character of Finch Hatton. He's made into an almost mythic figure. He doesn't seem human enough. Thus when she loses him we don't fully share her sorrow. But when she loses her farm and must leave Africa, we feel more deeply, even without the fuller treatment it could have been given, her pain.

Out of Africa is beautifully shot and well-acted. It could have been better, I think, with greater development of this woman's love for Africa. Nevertheless, we come away loving her—the land, the woman—all the same.

For fun, here's my list of the 10 best films of 1985:

1. The Color Purple
2. The Purple Rose of Cairo
3. Out of Africa
4. Streetwise
5. Kiss of the Spider Woman
6. Mask
7. Witness
8. The Emerald Forest
9. Cocoon
10. Prizzi's Honor

LETTERS

Information left out

I'd like to call your attention to a small error in the news section of *The Mennonite*, Oct. 22, 1985. (It's an error made by the correspondent, I'm sure, and not the editorial staff.) It is in the item on the Oklahoma Convention, the last paragraph. The Cheyenne Christian hymn was sung not just by the Koinonia Church but by a group from Koinonia Church in Clinton, Okla., and Bethel Church in Hammon, Okla. *Elvina N. Martens, Box 116, Hammon, OK 73650*

Nov. 17

Letters judgmental

I find our *Mennonite* rating high by every standard of a church periodical. The writing quality of feature articles and choice of subject material are excellent.

The letter section has worthwhile, tactful responses generally. The Dec. 10, 1985, issue contains two letters critical of Peter Ediger's "I Am a Fundamentalist" (Aug. 27, 1985, issue) by Philip Friesen, Taiwan, and Herbert Dalke, Sterling, Ill.

"Open Letter to Peter Ediger" by Mr. Friesen pained me. Why? Because it was a ruthless attack by a Christian brother of another Christian brother. It lacked every quality of the relationship that should exist between members of God's family.

Mr. Friesen could have expressed himself in terms not portraying himself as the ultimate in biblical interpretation. Words can be very poor vehicles for expressing feelings. Some of his phrases, "sheep in wolf's clothing," "trying to be funny," "deliberate attempt to deceive," sound extremely judgmental. That kind of quality would never qualify me as a fundamentalist. Mr. Friesen, are you sure Peter Ediger's words meant what you say they did?

Mr. Dalke's letter in the same issue, though not as cutting, ends with, "I believe the Bible has its own best statements on these topics." Very true. But it is limited, sinful man who battles over what they mean. *Lydia Ewert, 309 S. Cedar, Hillsboro, KS 67063*

Dec. 11

More about Jesus

In Jesus as a "foundation of our faith" (Nov. 26, 1985, issue), J. Denny Weaver excellently describes those features of our Lord which Mennonites have always emphasized. However, he gives little attention to additional features which other Christians—and most Mennonites—have stressed.

According to Weaver, Mennonites take "most seriously" those early ecumenical councils which declared Jesus was of "one substance with the Father" and "truly God." Yet Weaver's own terms for this dimension of Jesus are "ultimate reference point," "focal point," the one in whom "we see manifested the will and presence of God," the one in whom "the kingdom of God is most fully revealed," etc. Such terms need indicate no more than a great teacher or prophet, a worthy instrument used by God. I miss the emphasis that when Jesus comes among us and suffers for us, God himself—and not merely God's representative—lives with us and dies for us.

In one sentence Weaver mentions Jesus' resurrection as "victory over the ultimate enemy of death. . . ." Otherwise, however, his article is devoted to showing (very capably) what Jesus means for earthly life. But if death is indeed the ultimate enemy, I wish more attention had been given to Jesus' function in delivering us from it. (Perhaps Weaver gives this little attention because his biblical foundations seem to come mostly from the synoptic Gospels and seldom from Paul, Hebrews or John.)

Weaver affirms both that Jesus is divine and the Savior from death. I'd like to see this more developed in an article on Jesus as the "foundation of our faith." *Thomas Finger, 5748 West Race, Chicago, IL 60644*

Dec. 13

Our sentences

Sr. Margaret Kiefer and I were sentenced Dec. 2, 1985, for the July 16 planting of sprouted wheat at Consolidated Space Operations Center. Sr. Margaret was given a $50 suspended fine, and I was given two days in jail and given credit due to 10 days in jail last July. Our lawyer split the court cost of $96 with us. The judge was sympathetic and lenient, stating that our wheat sprouts probably improved the land. Thanks to all who supported. *Esther L. Kisamore, 411 West Bijou St., Colorado Springs, CO 80905*

Dec. 13

Camp administrator needed

Camp Deerpark, Westbrookville, N.Y., is looking for a camp administrator to begin in early 1986. Responsibilities will include:

1. overseeing camp operations
2. financial planning
3. publicity and fund raising
4. long-range camp development
5. personnel management.

Submit resumes to:
Leonor C. Kennell
Box 513
Westbrookville, NY 12785.

Camp Deerpark is located near the Catskill Mountains and serves the New York City Mennonite churches and other urban congregations.

PE instructor needed

Bluffton College seeks an instructor/assistant/associate professor of health, physical education and recreation. MA in HPER minimal. Teaching and coaching experience preferred.

Coaching responsibilities include softball, basketball, women's intramural director, extensive recruiting. Teaching responsibilities include administration of HPER, history/philosophy of HPER, adapted PE and sport skill classes.

Send resume to:
Wesley Richard
Interim dean of academic affairs
Bluffton College
Bluffton, OH 45817.

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Apply by Feb. 28 to:
Personnel Committee, MCC BC
Box 2038
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8
(604) 859-4141.

Editor's journal jottings

From Oct. 24-Dec. 2, 1985, I visited Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, Colombia and Panama. This included a 2½-week preaching assignment in Paraguay. In this and the next two issues of The Mennonite *I share some of the notes recorded in my daily diary during those days.* Bernie Wiebe

Thursday, Oct. 24
It seems like just another series of services, except that I am not going alone. Accompanying me to serve in the Paraguay churches is the Spencer Quartet—four men from the Grunthal (Man.) Bergthaler Church, farmers who have been singing together for 25 years. We raised our own funds to pay for the trip. All services will be in German.

Suddenly, at Miami International Airport, it becomes clear that this is a different trip. I am to go to the VARIG counter—a Brazilian airline.

Friday, Oct. 25
The first surprise. Arriving at the Mennoheim (Mennonite Hotel) in Asunción, we trade in some U.S. dollars for Guarani. Suddenly, instead of $50 I have 35,000 Guarani. It feels rich. A soft drink costs 100 G.

Saturday, Oct. 26
Our first of 25 services in the Chaco—at the Mennonite High School (Colegio Menonita) in Loma Plata. A kind reception. They request one English song by the quartet, then find the strange sounds of "Just a little talk with Jesus" to be hilariously funny.

Much to our amazement, word about this "strange English" spread across the colony like wildfire. Everywhere we went, people requested "at least one" English song.

We visit a critically ill Mr. Kehler at the hospital.

Sunday, Oct. 27
Sunday in the Chaco. Close to 100°F. The new Elim Church in Loma Plata is full and many sit outside. Pastor Abram Wiebe, also the area conference leader, welcomes us "warmly."

First impression: Wow, way over half the people present are under 20. Tons of young children. People here must still believe that children are "a heritage from the Lord" (Psalm 127:3).

This evening we serve at the Lengua Indian Church on the edge of Loma Plata. We learn about mañana—something we soon came to appreciate. At 6 p.m., which is to be the starting time, one person stands in the church door (see photo). The soccer (they call it football) game is not yet over. By 6:45 the church is SRO (standing room only). All the windows are open and surrounded by people. Three of their choirs sing beautifully, with instrumental accompaniment, before our turn comes.

I preach in Low German; missionary John Toews interprets into Lengua.

Another impression. Late at night Pastor Wiebe and several other Elim leaders go to serve communion to Mr. Kehler at the hospital and to receive him into church membership. Following the morning service, at a special membership meeting, they vote almost unanimously in favor of the dying man's request. He has made a commitment to Christ after a wayward life and now wants to become part of God's family. A moving experience with a profound spiritual impact.

I get introduced to the green, herbal tea ("yerba") that seems to be a trademark at almost every home here. It's good cold or hot.

Monday, Oct. 28
I awake early to the sound of a messenger on the yard of Rev. Wiebe. Yes, only a few hours after his being accepted as a fellow believer in the body of Christ, Mr. Kehler died. The funeral is this afternoon—with the church full again.

Tonight we serve at a youth Bible study in Loma Plata. I am impressed when I see well over 200 young people—the majority with Bibles. Later, one of the deacons tells me they have 600 young people among their families.

People here talk a lot about "fences." Took me a while to discover they mean their acreage out of town, usually implying some (in some cases many) cattle on that acreage and sometimes also a "cottage."

Another concept new to me is their use of "bunch." Young people's meetings may be referred to as "bunch." Upon reflection, it seems quite appropriate.

Thursday, Oct. 31
This evening's muddy roads lead to the Buena Vista Church. In spite of the weather, flashlights glimmer all over as many people walk to church. Once again a packed house.

Halloween in the Chaco? Sure enough, we are awakened at night to crashing noises and the roar of many motorbikes. I wondered about the old fashioned two-holer these folks used in their backyard.

Next morning we find one feeding crib capsized in the pasture. No other pranks.

Friday, Nov. 1
I won't forget this day too easily. We visit a widower who less than a month ago buried his 47-year-old wife. She died of cancer . . . 10 children left without a mother. The numbness of shock is still strong.

After the evening service, a young couple seeks me out privately. They are struggling with critical marital problems.

As I walk home about 1 a.m. I suddenly realize how pitch dark the Chaco can become. There have been other nights when I expressed amazement at how the stars seemed to stand out like suspended ceiling lights. I suspect part of this new awareness came because in this climate the people are living close to nature. But tonight I am lost in the dark. After three false driveways, I finally spot a landmark. What a relief! For some mysterious reason, the

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Frank and Mary Doerksen at customs in Asunción

At the Asunción Mennoheim

The Elim Church, Loma Plata

dog doesn't bark. He comes to me as if I belong. I salvage a rather unnerving half hour. Sleep like a log.

Saturday, Nov. 2
Hit our first snag. Rained out at South Menno. "Not to worry," we are told. "You'll serve elsewhere." Get a taste of the Chaco network. Within hours we are told that services have been switched to Grunthal and Weidenfeld.

Visit with the Henry Friesens of Loma Plata. They are hoping to study in Canada during the 1986-87 school year in the area of social work. Being assisted by Mennonite Mental Health Services. Also expecting a baby at any minute. (Patrick, their son, got a brother.)

Sunday, Nov. 3
What a day! Ride to Grunthal in back of a pickup (they use a Spanish word which I don't quite catch—some of us are slow, you know) and actually put on a jacket. It can be cool in the Chaco even as they are in their spring.

Two packed houses! Beautiful fellowship in the home of pastor Willie Reimer. Three inquisitive sons—Amando, 7, Ronald, 6, Edelbert, 5. "Are you serious that in Winnipeg the snow can be higher than a car?" My reply, "That's not serious. We worry when the drifts reach the edge of the rooftops." "Wow, I'd love to see that," is the eager reply of Edelbert.

Willie is a part-time pastor (of both churches) and a part-time farmer. He shows me the machines they use to tame the Chaco (a "strucka" to strike down small trees and large weeds, a "rippa" to tear up the virgin soil).

Besides farming and pastoring, Willie has a vision for missions and evangelism to the far corners of the globe. We find ourselves in such kindred concerns and discussion that time flies even more than usual. Our keen friendship will continue; we both feel it and express it. Strong opinions about conferences.

Monday, Nov. 4
By now I have learned the value of the Chaco "siesta." I'm not normally a daytime napper. But here it becomes vital for energy retention and replenishment. It has become a beautiful, personal time I quite enjoy.

One of my aunts (Father's sister) was among the 1926 emigrants from Canada to the Chaco. For the first time in my life I've met a first cousin, Mrs. Lise Penner, and her husband, John. They are retired and live in a unit by the home for the elderly. We become fast friends and I go there each chance I get. She was almost a teenager when she left Manitoba before I was born. Already they have fascinated me with new stories about my grandfather and other relatives. Today we make plans together to drive (they want me to be the chauffeur in their VW) to South Menno and visit my only other surviving first cousin there—Maria, who is 76 and was in her mid-teens when they moved to Paraguay. It's exciting to anticipate more discoveries.

Tuesday, Nov. 5
The Trans Chaco Mission board has the quartet and me for breakfast. Seven years ago they received affirmation to work as a special, voluntary (not Conference-budgeted) ministry directed at about a million Paraguayan people in an area with few churches and little acquaintance with the Bible. The seven "official" (some have up to three meetinghouses) churches of Menno Colony all have representatives on the board.

Their director, Johann Hiebert, tells about their radio broadcasts, Bible and Testament distribution, film ministry and personal visitation. Have several nationals working with them. Some churches started.

Today we go to Filadelfia in the Fernheim Colony for a service there. It's a different world from Menno! Filadelfia is a bustling, booming town. Schedules sound like home. Our first church that feels empty. (They were actually surprised that 300-400 people attended. But the church has a capacity of 1,500.)

Wednesday, Nov. 6
Another day in the life . . . . We rush over to ZP30 studios to tape a meditation, songs and interview. Our hosts hustle us over to the home for the aged ("Abendfrieden"—I like the name: "evening peace"). These people don't want us to leave, but cars are honking. Next stop is Hoffnungsheim ("home of hope"—another pleasant name), the mental health center. All this before lunch. The visit in Fernheim was too short.

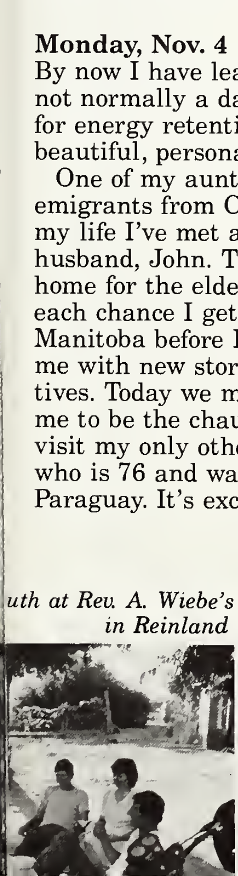
Now off to Neuland Colony for a service at Neu-Halbstadt. More like a full (not totally) house again.

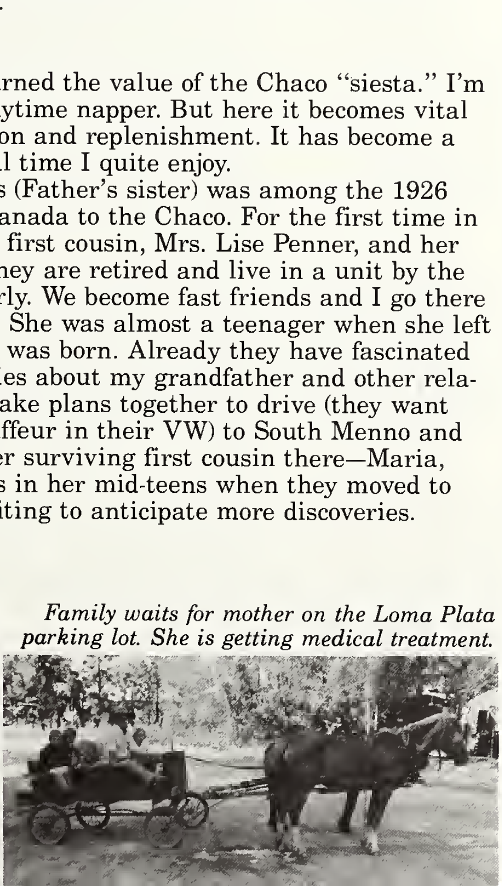
The day is too full to absorb it. I feel like I've been in a whirlwind. It is fortunate that they decided to put some of us up at the Hotel Boqueron. I readily volunteer for a chance to retreat and regroup. It is needed both physically and spiritually. These people have a way of drawing from me everything I've got.

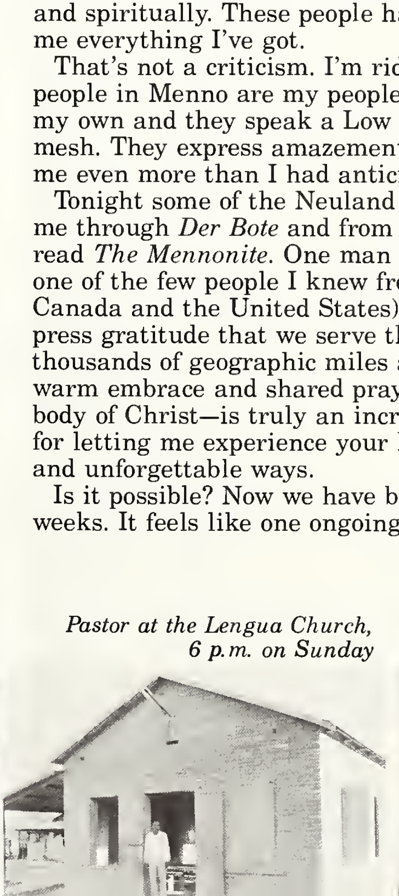
That's not a criticism. I'm riding high in the Chaco. The people in Menno are my people; their roots are identical to my own and they speak a Low German just like I do. We mesh. They express amazement. I feel it too. God is giving me even more than I had anticipated. Thank you, Lord.

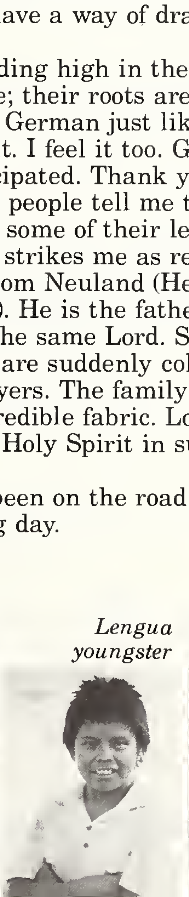
Tonight some of the Neuland people tell me they know of me through *Der Bote* and from some of their leaders who read *The Mennonite*. One man strikes me as resembling one of the few people I knew from Neuland (He studied in Canada and the United States). He is the father. They express gratitude that we serve the same Lord. Somehow the thousands of geographic miles are suddenly collapsed into warm embrace and shared prayers. The family of God—the body of Christ—is truly an incredible fabric. Lord, thanks for letting me experience your Holy Spirit in such powerful and unforgettable ways.

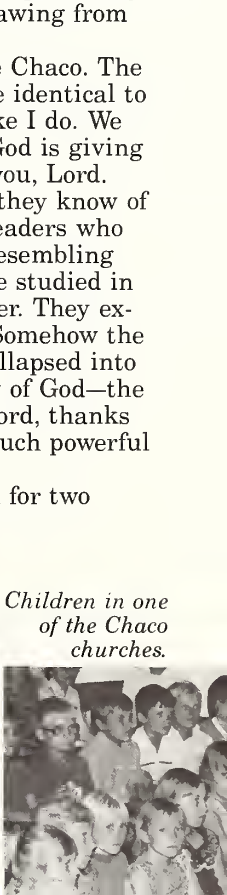
Is it possible? Now we have been on the road for two weeks. It feels like one ongoing day.


uth at Rev. A. Wiebe's in Reinland


Family waits for mother on the Loma Plata parking lot. She is getting medical treatment.


Pastor at the Lengua Church, 6 p.m. on Sunday


Lengua youngster


Children in one of the Chaco churches.

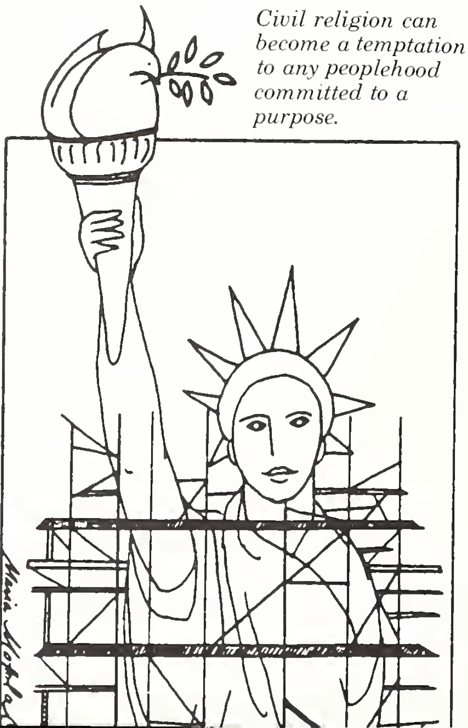
Civil religion and Mennonites

Brian Dyck

How should the Christian relate to the state? This question goes to the roots of our Anabaptist faith, and we have had to deal with it in every country and under every government we have faced. When we were a clear minority facing a state church that we did not agree with, it was easy to speak of separation of church and state and staying clear of government involvement. Now things are different. Now governments tell us we have religious freedom, and we are not being killed for what we believe.

Here in North America, religion played an important role in the development of the peoplehood of Canada and the United States. Many who first came here came largely for religious reasons. They wanted to be free of the Church of England. Of those who came to settle in North America in the 17th century, no group made a greater contribution to the development of what is now the American Civil Religion than the Puritans who came to Massachusetts Bay in 1629.

The Puritans were a small religious sect who wanted to purify England and the church. They were influenced greatly by John Calvin and were concerned mostly with moral issues. They had great difficulty working for change and, in the early 17th century, some of them thought of leaving England and going to settle in the new world. There they could set up their city—"a city set on a hill"—a shining beacon for all the world to see and copy. They would be God's faithful remnant who had crossed the Red Sea into the Promised Land. There they would make a covenant with God and, if they obeyed his command and were just and righteous, they would be rewarded. And if they failed, they would perish in the wilderness.



Civil religion can become a temptation to any peoplehood committed to a purpose.

With these high ideals and deep responsibilities, the settlement of the new world began. As the difficulties of the first years faded and those who had been born in the new land began to take charge, the dream of God's community seemed less and less a reality. Still, a belief that this land held something special lived on. Even today many Americans believe that the United States and the ideals it stands for hold a special place in God's plan.

This American tradition is not our tradition as a Mennonite people, but those of us who have lived in the United States for an extended length of time or have gone to public school there are familiar with at least the spirit of the tradition. On Thanksgiving Day we hear the "creation story" and how the Pilgrims came to this land to gain freedom. In American history, a class every U.S. high school student takes, we hear of heroes of the faith such as Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln. There are hymns and a creed which speaks of "liberty and justice for all."

Today religious leaders such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson are also promoting the faith in the American Civil Religion from their highly visible pulpits. Their civil religion seems to ignore some of the responsibilities of the original covenant that the Puritans made.

We Mennonites have a special responsibility here because of our tradition in relating to the state.

The civil religion of today seems to use the church and God to justify the actions of the state. In the 16th century the Anabaptists split from the Catholic and state churches because they believed in separation of the church and state. Perhaps today's Civil Religion is the new official church. We must not offer blind loyalty to the state as the French did under Napoleon or the Germans did under Hitler and which some modern interpreters of the American Civil Religion seem to be calling us to do. The church has a responsibility to be a prophetic voice to the state.

We owe it to the world and to our tradition to remain a prophetic voice, regardless of which nation is our home.

On the other hand, we cannot reject the American Civil Religion as many who fear and resent the actions of the United States have done. The American Civil Religion has many problems, and early the covenant to live as a just and righteous community was broken. But the original covenant was good and there are many positive ideals in it. Just as we should try to work with the culture and traditions that we meet in a traditional mission field, so too we must work with the culture and tradition we meet at home. We must call America back to the covenant it broke and urge it to be a force for a free and just world community.

Brian Dyck, a native of Newton, Kan., works on the kitchen staff at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and resides at 181 Balmoral St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1X7.

MEDITATION

Keep Christmas in the new year

My thoughts wandered as I took the dusty Christmas decorations off the mantle and began packing them away in boxes. How quickly the holidays had come and gone. The memory of them was already blurred.

"Keep Christmas well." Those words of a dear friend echoed through my mind. I felt a deep sense of remorse. Despite last year's resolutions and the fact that I had 364 days to prepare for Christmas, I had again found myself uptight and irritable as I raced to get everything done. By the time Christmas arrived, I had been too tired to even enjoy it, much less to "keep it well."

For one fleeting moment during the Christmas Eve worship service I looked up at the cross and felt the wonder of Christ's birth. God sent his Son as a babe knowing full well that he would one day hang on a cross for my sins. "O come let us adore him," I had sung with a swelling heart. But all too quickly the moment was lost and forgotten as I rushed home to arrange the buffet of goodies and wrap those last few gifts.

"Oh Lord, please forgive me," I prayed as I slumped into a chair and fought back the tears that were ready to spill down my cheeks.

It won't do any good to get depressed, I chided myself. I can't push back the clock and relive the last few weeks, but I can learn from them. I can learn to begin my preparations earlier for next Christmas. I can choose to focus on the spiritual instead of the material. I can make time for private and family worship. I can teach my children the joy of giving gifts of themselves.

My enthusiasm fell as quickly as the needles from my drooping tree. I knew myself too well. As always I would succumb to the time pressures that invariably get in the way of the things I really want to do.

I sighed as I continued packing away ornaments and lights. I wrestled the tree out of the stand and carried it outdoors. How bare and empty the living room looked. Only the nativity scene remained on the piano. I began to carefully wrap each figure in newspaper, when suddenly it occurred to me: leave it there. The scene could remain on my piano throughout the year, next to the painting of Christ as an adult. Together they affirm that Christmas was not an end, but the beginning of God's continuing gift to us.

"O come let us adore him," I again sang as I unwrapped the baby Jesus and laid him back in the manger. I would keep Christmas by allowing him to be reborn in my heart each day. I would be faithful in the work he was calling me to do. I would joyfully share his love with others. I would triumph over pressures and problems. I would keep Christmas well—not just 355 days from now but each day of this new year.

Marlene Bagnull

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Once again we have discarded old calendars for new. For many it seems we were at this point only yesterday. To others it seemed 1985 would never end.

All of us are into a new year. It affords new chances for new life. Could this be a Damascus road year for you? Is this the year our imitation of God finally will jell into fuller flower? Or is this a year when growth will continue almost naturally out of our gratitude to God for his blessings last year?

Wherever you and I stand on the threshold of 1986, God's Spirit is beckoning us to move forward in confidence.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

That lonesome valley

As I sat down to write our family's Christmas letter recently, I looked back on the worst year of my life. In August 1985 my wife and I suffered a miscarriage. It was our third miscarriage in the space of a year.

As I've grieved these losses and felt the wounds to my faith in God's goodness, I've reflected on suffering. Each experience of suffering has brought me in touch with others who have suffered.

I'm convinced that everyone who suffers—and this means everyone—must at some point walk alone. The old song pulls no punches: "You got to walk that lonesome valley. . . . You got to walk it by yourself."

If I were to design a creed about suffering, I would begin with this: Suffering is a mystery. I will not pretend to have answers for the why of suffering.

I've also decided that it does me no good to compare sufferings. The statement "It could have been worse" holds some comfort, I suppose, but it hasn't helped me. Each experience of pain is unique and personal. No other experience is quite the same. I do not want to judge at what level of suffering a certain experience should be classified.

In Dostoevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, Father Zossima embraces a man because, he says, the man has suffered, and suffering is holy. Without wishing to promote masochism, I believe this. Suffering has the potential, at least, to remind us that we are mortal, that we are not in control of events, that we depend upon God's mercy for our lives. It can also help strip us of superficial concerns, of materialism and self-reliance, and can help us establish proper priorities.

The philosopher Santayana wrote, "A young man who has not wept is a savage, and an old man who will not laugh is a fool." With time, I believe, I hope, suffering can bring not only empathy but wisdom, though it can also instill cynicism.

Suffering tempers our easy optimism and checks our prejudices. You can often recognize those who have suffered. They are slow to give opinions when some issue is being discussed. They are patient with those caught in some sin. They withhold judgment because they have felt its sting.

Suffering, though done in solitude, unites us with humanity. We become part of a mysterious movement whose design we cannot figure out. We read the Book of Job with different eyes. We realize that on the cross Jesus was not simply quoting a psalm when he screamed, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" He meant it.

We no longer try to defend God, as did Job's friends, who had not come to terms with their own suffering. We no longer say to others who are hurting, "It was God's will" or, "Some good will come of it." We know that silence and tears are more often needed.

When you suffer a loss, the world changes. Life doesn't seem as trustworthy, and you feel unprotected. Certain things that may have seemed important to you no longer seem so. You're left alone. Your closest, most reliable companion is silence. And in that silence you may realize that God is present and always has been. And you wait . . . for your deepest—and only real—hope.

Gordon Houser

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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Can you love a TERRORIST?

Sanford Boshart

As Mennonites we claim a radically unique method of responding to evil. We reject violence as an appropriate way of dealing with violence. We promote love and understanding as alternatives. Yet our witness on these matters tends to be incomplete and perhaps shallow. Seldom are we in a position to implement the advice we may give to others. We avoid holding public office or having anything to do with the creation and enforcement of law. We avoid high-crime neighborhoods or situations where violence may occur.

Terrorists recently took 39 Americans hostage. People in high places of office were forced to respond to them. What advice do we give as Mennonites? What would we do in their position?

Certainly this is just one example of a violent situation. But it may bring into focus our inadequacy as Mennonites in being a prophetic witness in the land. I personally struggled with this issue and found that answers did not come easily. Looking back on our Anabaptist tradition does not provide a lot of guidance. Praying for the terrorists and their hostages is insufficient. Words of caring and sympathy will not pacify the desperate people who have taken this action. If our own lives were at stake, perhaps we should be willing to sacrifice ourselves. But we cannot be so free to offer up the lives of others.

On the other hand, we sense the futility of responses coming from American officials. Threats of military retaliation, name-calling and other such pronouncements have the sound of a childish tantrum. The difference is that government officials are forced to respond in some manner. As Mennonites, we enjoy the luxury of not having this responsibility.

We have chosen our luxury and perhaps are wrong for doing so. If we truly understand the best way of dealing with violence, should we not seek positions of social responsibility where this knowledge is needed? At least we should offer our understanding to people in those positions. But perhaps we are not so wise and sure of the answers ourselves. Admitting it would be an expression of Christian humility and an important step.

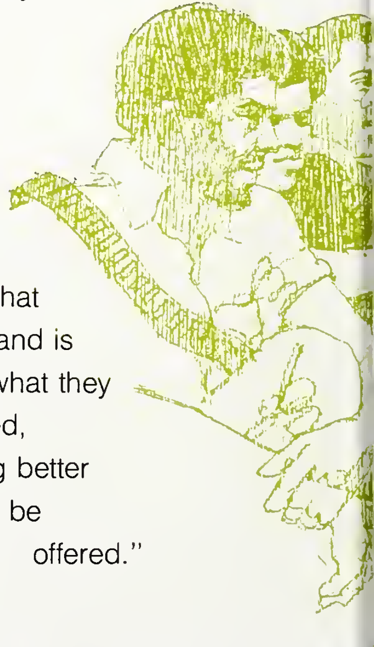
A common response of Mennonites might be to encourage our government to do nothing. Doing nothing returns responsibility for solving situations to other people. If our government chose this response, full responsibility would fall upon the terrorists to resolve the situation they have created. They might choose to abandon the project or they might choose to kill the hostages in order to get the desired attention.

This response would be a mistake. Terrorists are desperate people. They lack the moral discipline necessary to resolve situations in a satisfactory manner. We should hope and pray that they repent of their hatred and violence. But ignoring them and doing nothing will not encourage repentance. It will increase their frustration and anger.

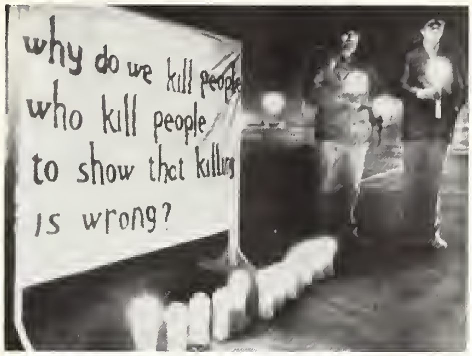
Terrorists become terrorists because they have problems they are unable to solve by themselves. They are desperately seeking help. The specific forms of aid they demand may not be the help we should offer. But if what they demand is not what they truly need, something better must be offered. This is where our government fails in responding to terrorists.

Our government has little or no commitment to the welfare of Shiites, Iranians, Salvadorans and a host of other groups from which terrorists emerge. Our government engages in or else supports systematic economic and political violence, if not military violence, against these groups. As long as such policies continue, the problems of the oppressed and impoverished will grow and their desperation increase.

Many of the demands of the terrorists and even of the groups they represent may be illegitimate. However, until their legitimate needs and interests are addressed in a sensitive, caring manner, those which are illegitimate cannot be dealt with appropriately.



"... if what they demand is not what they truly need, something better must be offered."



"Our own repentance must precede any effort to influence secular America"

The Reagan-type response to terrorism is a classic example of how to increase hatred and violence within our world. His attitude is that terrorists are "jackals" who do not deserve the slightest attention or concern. How he and other Americans who call for military retaliation continue to skip over some of the most essential teachings of Christ is beyond me.

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44 KJV).

Loving our enemies is complex. It requires a great deal of sorting out. Seldom does loving others mean doing everything they demand. But it does require becoming sensitive to their needs and their problems, especially in the case of people who turn to violence. It involves getting close to them, which may be dangerous and unpleasant. Few of us are willing to do that. The U.S. government's refusal to hold discussions with terrorist groups reflects its lack of interest in understanding them.

What advice do we give our government in responding to the demands of Shiite terrorists holding 39 Americans hostage? First, release the 700 prisoners held by Israel. The claim is that they were going to be released anyway. But much more importantly, let it be known that our government will seriously address the legitimate needs and interests of the Shiite people. Let our response be a repentance of our failure to love these alien people, who have become our enemies because of our failure to be as concerned for them as we are for ourselves. If we zealously commit ourselves to their interests as we are committed to our own, and they choose to remain our enemies, only then can we claim an injustice is being done against us.

When American people come face to face with the desperate hatred of Salvadoran, Shiite or Iranian terrorists, we face the results of our own influence upon other cultures. If we do not like what we see, we must change our influence.

This kind of repentance is alien to most of us. We are too filled with pride and self-righteousness to believe we may be partially responsible for the kind of people that terrorists have become. We put a huge amount of effort into distancing ourselves from people such as these. We call them animals and inhuman to reinforce the attitude that they are not at all like us. We refuse to listen to anything that indicates their demands may have a legitimate basis. We are deceiving ourselves. They are no different than we are, as many of the returning hostages have testified. If faced with their circumstances, we would be tempted to indulge in desperate measures similar to those they have taken.

Several of the hostages have been severely criticized for fraternizing with their captors and developing an affection for them. The presumption is that being friendly to the enemy is tantamount to treason. Perhaps the friendliness and openness of these hostages toward their captors made it much more difficult for them to kill. This would be the Christian presumption. Instead the attitude of most Americans seems to be that being tough and aloof is the only way to deal with one's enemy. Those who acted otherwise have been shamed and ostracized. Where have we gotten these attitudes? Certainly not from our Bibles.

To love our enemies is a biblical imperative. Not to submit to evil is another. Throughout his life Jesus refused to meet demands and expectations that derived from violence and sin. Reconciling the imperative to love our enemies with that of not submitting to evil is a great personal challenge. It is also a collective challenge.

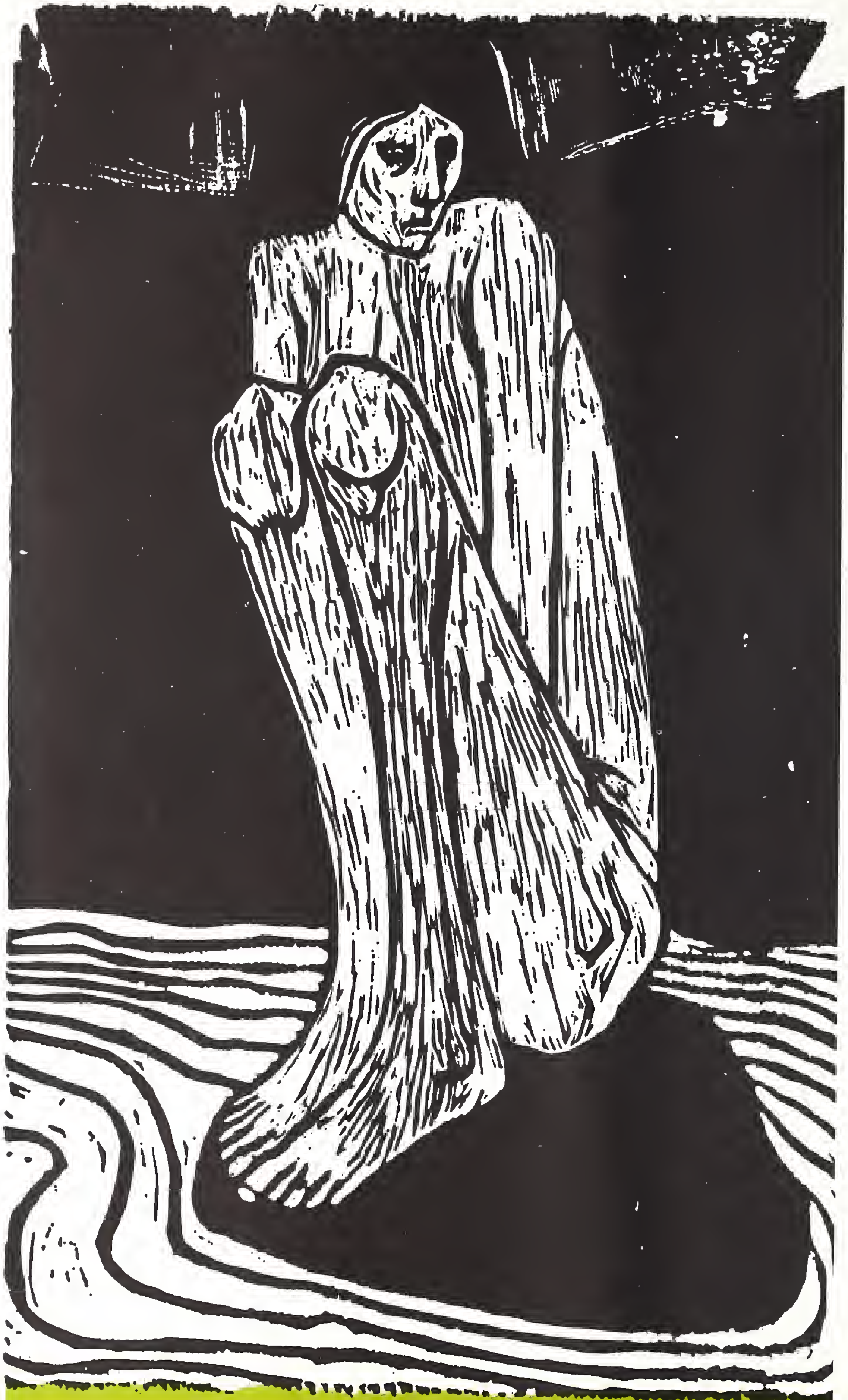
The government continuously claims to be acting on our behalf. By voting and paying taxes we support its claims. If we vote and pay taxes, we have the responsibility to expect our government to act as we would act. We must make it clear that politicians and their policies who breed hatred and violence do not represent us.

Acting as leaven within a variety of organizations, we are called to zealously represent the legitimate interests of groups who have become enemies to our government. We will face laws and government restrictions designed to impede our efforts. We will be called traitors to our country and hated for what we do. It is dangerous and unpleasant work. But it is our Christian duty.

To love our enemies is to fly in the face of government policy. American foreign policy has seldom been consistent with Christian responsibility. Whether its enemies were British, American, Indian, Mexican, Confederate, German, Japanese, Russian or Vietnamese, the American government has hated its enemies. It has been determined to either coerce submission to American interests or destroy them.

Mennonites have sometimes stood as a witness against these policies. At other times we have collaborated. By remaining silent while we vote for and pay our taxes to people who act in this manner we are collaborators. Our own repentance must precede any effort to influence secular America.

Until we as Americans begin to love our enemies, our enemies will multiply. Even more than during a time of war, Mennonite voices are needed in the land. The kinds of attitudes being nurtured in America today lead to war. To speak out after armed conflict has begun may be too little too late. If our desire is to prevent war, now is the time to express sensitive concern for our enemies. Let us support each other as we challenge the American public in this direction. •



It is tempting for us to try and save ourselves from the dangerous stream by perching on what seems like a secure rock.

Children often have a way of getting under their parents' skin. I am not referring to those occasions when children test the rules of the house by coming home too late or by participating in unapproved activities. I'm referring to when sons or daughters question the mindset of their parents regarding their approach to certain religious-political issues. In our case the issues are our desire for military disarmament and the ways we try to bring it about.

Most Mennonites believe the solution to ending the inhumanity of war is to get the major powers to disarm and to encourage non-violent ways of resolving conflict. But our efforts to bring about these changes are meager when compared to the efforts of those working for a military buildup and who see military force as the solution to problems.

Our two sons are not satisfied with our responses. Perhaps they do not have enough faith. Or, on the other hand, they truly believe it is possible to influence the most powerful governments in the world. (I sometimes think we Mennonites believe, without saying so, that we cannot really change the course of events. After all, "There will be wars and rumors of wars." But then why did Jesus spend so much time on the sick and maimed, since he knew they would always exist?)

Number two son, Kenton, is completing a master's degree in political science, specializing in international relations. He believes Mennonites tend to isolate themselves too much and should become more directly involved in politics. We should start by studying how nations deal with each other and how these relations can be influenced. This may entail lobbying, educating others and/or direct employment in agencies in Washington that deal with foreign policy.

Would this sort of action be more or less Christian, more or less Mennonite, than what we are doing now? In essence Kenton is challenging us to do more by direct involvement inside the system instead of criticizing from the outside. After all, what will happen in

Disarmament:

Is it all or nothing?

(An article to encourage dialogue)

A. Emerson Wiens

our government if those who share our values all stay outside the system?

Mark, our oldest son, is also critical of Mennonites for their "naive idealism" and recommends a more pragmatic approach. A number of issues exist, he believes, which Mennonite Christians should support politically as steppingstones to disarmament. These issues would appear like compromises to many pacifists but could generate wide support among many other religious and citizen groups. While some Mennonite Christians would agree with him, I suspect a majority of us prefer to remain purists, sitting in our comfortable homes in Middle America, enjoying the "American dream" and complaining, not too loudly, about the warring tendencies of the White House. Having worked for several years in the midst of the business environment as a commercial advertising photographer, Mark believes many Mennonite businessmen and women are afraid to take an antimilitary position for fear it will hurt their business. Some, in fact, go to considerable pain to rewrite the gospel or simply ignore it so as to alleviate their responsibilities regarding being their brothers and sisters' keepers.

First, Mark raises a genuine concern about the mixing of conventional warheads and nuclear warheads on the same warship and for the same plane. This not only enhances the chance of mistakenly sending a nuclear device but puts the enemy in a precarious position of not knowing which weapon has been fired in a conflict. The enemy may decide to retaliate with nuclear weapons on the assumption that the weapon fired by the United States has a nuclear warhead. While we Christians would like to see no war planes and war ships at all—an improbability in the near future—we should at least promote those practices in the armed forces which reduce the possibility of starting a nuclear war.

Mother Teresa, founder of the Missionaries of Charity, urges us to "serve until it hurts." Are we prepared to get involved until it hurts?

Considering the Mennonite reputation of frugality and careful handling of money, "Mennonite Christians," says Mark, "ought to be leading the crowd demanding more efficient military spending." After all, every dollar spent on the military is a dollar taken from a taxpayer and cannot be used to improve the human condition in this country or elsewhere. Would demanding efficient military spending compromise our position too much?

By now we have all heard of the $7,500 coffeemaker ordered by the air force. And there are other ways the U.S. military wastes money. (1) From a practical standpoint, we have enough nuclear weapons to kill everyone in the world several times. Why do we keep producing more? (2) Our new weapons are too complex, resulting in high cost, malfunctions and high maintenance. (3) Too much duplication exists among the military branches, much of it based on pride and jealousy. (4) The size of the Defense Department has grown from 69 personnel under Truman to 22,000 today. (5) Currently, management personnel in the Defense Department are promoted on the basis of the *number* of military contracts they push through. (The Defense Department signs 56,000 contracts a day.) This practice must stop. (6) Cost overruns are expected by Pentagon staff.

How can we, on practical grounds, support the satellite-operated "defense" system? Critics believe it will only accelerate the arms race, and most believe it is only a step away from a satellite "offense" system when we could all have weapons from our enemies stationed above us. Do you have to be a Christian to oppose this?

Both sons believe we should combine forces with other groups who are striving for more efficiency in the Pentagon and those who are taking other stances on military issues that would reduce the threat of war and the threat of a nuclear holocaust. We should be less concerned about why other groups are taking their positions. We also need to remember that money is power in our society. We need money to influence Congress and other government officials. Does our money-use ethic make it easier to give to MCC than to lobbyists or to groups supporting disarmament or a reduction in military spending?

What would Christ have us do today? Have we isolated ourselves too much, as Mark and Kenton suggest? I have usually argued that Christianity is idealistic, not pragmatic. Should it be? Can it be both?

Although we understand that God expects us to be his instruments on the earth, showing his love to all people, are we content to work at the one-to-one level but afraid to take on government policy? Should we be encouraging our people to enter politics and government employment where they might have more direct influence over domestic and foreign policy? These questions, I believe, need answers which will not dilute the gospel but will reinforce it and bring consistency to our witness. •

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Voices of faith from Mexico

Myron D. Schrag

From June 12-27, 1985, I traveled in Mexico, Nicaragua and El Salvador on a study tour under the auspices of the Center for Global Services and Education located at Augsburg College in Minneapolis. The trip was a profound spiritual experience for me, yet also a disturbing one. I experienced a variety of emotions in Central America, including anger and cynicism, but there were also times of hope, faith and inspiration. The latter is what I want to share.

Coetetelco is a rural village in southern Mexico. Ricardo is a "campesino" (farmer) working the fields around Coetetelco. Ricardo, a Christian, has been instrumental in organizing other farmers to improve their situation. His organization has worked to get permission to dig irrigation wells and to get lower interest rates on bank loans.

'The important thing is to help our brothers and sisters have a living faith.'

They also formed a group to study the Bible and to reflect on what it says to them as poor people.

In the Bible they saw that Jesus and his disciples did much work in common. They asked, "Who killed Jesus and why? It was not the poor." From the perspective of Ricardo, "Jesus didn't go around with the wealthy or with the authorities. He went among the simple people."

The Bible study helped them to understand that women especially have been oppressed in their culture. As a result the women of Coetetelco have organized for better health care and even organized a bank. In Coetetelco, because of Bible study, there is less "machismo" and more mutual respect between men and women.

"We are brothers and sisters if we believe in one God," said Ricardo. "The important thing is to help our brothers and sisters have a living faith. Paul said we must be converted. To be converted also means to help our brothers and sisters. If some are suffering from injustice, we must help our brothers and sisters who are being marginalized. To those who have authority, let them know there is an error they are committing. Pray that those who don't accept the message of the Word of God will change. We all have to live as brothers and sisters."

Cuernavaca, Mexico, is a city of about 500,000 people. Deep ravines cut through the city. Thousands of people live on the steep slopes of the ravines in crowded conditions. Most homes are little more than shanties patched together with tin, wood or whatever is available.

On a late Saturday afternoon we made our way down a steep ravine almost to the bottom, where we met with a dozen people in one of the homes. The group, known as a Base Christian Community, one of thousands of such groups throughout Central America, made up mostly of the poor, had come together for Bible study as they do every Saturday afternoon.

We were privileged to share in that afternoon's study of 2 Corinthians 5:14-21, a passage dealing with the ministry of reconciliation. It was inspiring to hear these mostly uneducated people grapple with the meaning of this passage from their "reality." Their insights seemed to me profound. Here are a few:

Margarita: "To be reconciled to God means to be reconciled to each other. Many use the Word of God to exploit their brothers and sisters. We shouldn't do that."

Jose: "If we are reconciled with our brothers and sisters, God is present. To do something against our brothers and sisters is to do something against God. . . . Our problems are problems of everyone. We carry the cross for others."

Rafael: "For God old things have passed away. If anyone of us has done something wrong, that is no reason to say we can no longer serve God. We can leave the old behind us. We can build a new world if we work together."

Angela: "We must feel love for all the rebellious, those who don't accept God. We who believe in God should be even closer to those who don't."

Myron D. Schrag is pastor of Faith Mennonite Church, 2801 East 22nd St., Minneapolis, MN 55406.

Winter

Rachel Hartman (age 11)

"Oh!" say the people
in Georgia with fright,
"It's so cold, it got down
in the 30s last night."

"Ha!" all the people
in Kentucky say
"We're lucky to get it
that warm in the day."

"Your little winter is
only a splinter
compared to the cold of
a Kentucky winter."

"Haw-Haw," Minnesotans say
with a jeer.
"You think that's cold?
Well, come on up here!"

"Your little winter is
only a splinter
compared to the cold of
a Minnesotan winter."

All the Canadians
say with a smile
"You haven't been cold
til you've been here a while."

"Your little winter is
only a splinter
compared to the chilly
Canadian winter."

"Well," say the Eskimos
from houses of snow,
"It's warm up here,
only 30° below."

"Your little winter is
only a splinter
compared to the freezing
Alaskan winter."

Wherever you live
New York or Denver,
Miami or Juneau
always remember:

"Your little winter is
only a splinter
compared to the cold of
a nuclear winter."

Look therefore carefully (Ephesians 6)

Gertrude Roten

The Christian's role in the fulfillment of the plan

Preserving the unity of the Spirit	Christ building up his body	Completely abandoning the old pattern of life	Wholeheartedly espousing the new pattern of life	The new life in purity and light	Family members must live together in mutual submission	Christians must be fully equipped for the spiritual warfare in which they are engaged	Conclusion
4:1 6	7 16	17 24	25 32	5:1 20	5:21 6:9	10 20	21 24

There is a surprising richness in the Ephesians 6:1-9 exhortation of children and parents, slaves and masters.

Humans are time-binding beings, tied to the past, struggling through the present, confronted with the future. We are born of parents, we produce children.

Four motivations are listed for children. They are "being in the Lord," expectation of doing what is right, a commandment of God and a promise from God. Paul wants his readers to find a good way of living so children may achieve their desire—to grow up and live long. Paul directs children to conduct that endures. Parents wish to avoid angry scenes. Paul makes parents responsible for avoiding anger, preventing the growth of an angry generation.

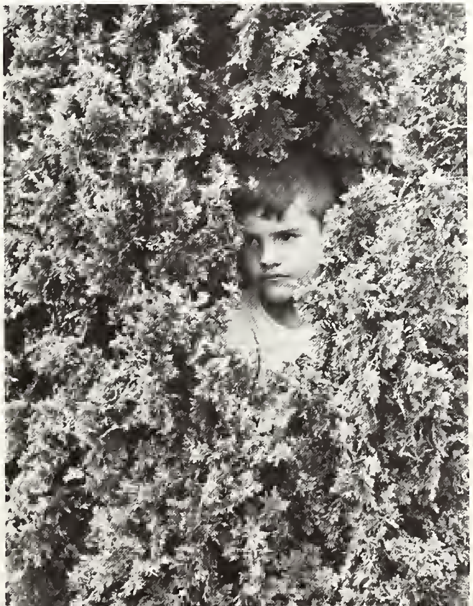
We are material beings. We have a place in an economic framework in which we possess, produce and consume. Slaves are to consider themselves Christ's slaves and work for him. Only when their work is done voluntarily and wholeheartedly can God's will be done. They are to avoid trickery in their fear of their masters. Enthusiasm for work substitutes for a desperate drudgery. The good you do is in the last resort no longer something you produce but a gift received from God. Paul foresees masters who treat their servants as equals rather than as underlings. Paul tells bosses, "Stop using threats. Be aware that in heaven the same Lord is ruling over them and over you. He fosters no favoritism."

Christ is central in the discussion. Those of supposedly high or low estate are subordinated to the same highest authority. Therefore, before the Lord and before one another, parents and children, masters and slaves occupy the same position. All must obey.

The Lord's coming figures into the discussion in regard to both reward and impartiality. The coming Lord alone decides on the right or wrong done by old and young, rich and poor.

It may seem that the exhortation burdens the supposedly weaker member and supports the more powerful: three verses to children—one to fathers, four verses to slaves—one to masters. But children are reminded to have confidence in the promise which includes outliving their parents. Slaves are made aware that they work for the Lord. It is a revolutionary step for Paul thus to place major emphasis upon the weaker member. Wives, children and slaves are made as responsible for a good social order as those who wield authority. The knowledge of the crucified Lord's authority gives Paul the courage to trust in the "power that is made perfect in weakness." As he works through these paradoxes, he has firm ground for his expectations. Jews and gentiles have become one people through the intervention of Christ. He is convinced that the groups enumerated in the Haustafeln can find peace when they subordinate themselves to one another because they fear Christ.

Paul's final injunctions in Ephesians include strong urgings for children also to proceed carefully.



In vv. 10-20 an armor tested by the author is presented to rich, poor, slave, priest, man, woman, youth, aged. "Put on the splendid armor of God." The battle is not against flesh and blood but against the wiles, best translated, "schemes of the devil." The enemy is a spiritual force, the days described as evil.

Every piece of the armor is in position. Truth covers the loins, righteousness serves as a breastplate, steadfastness characterizes the footing because the gospel of peace is strapped under the feet, faith is the shield. Here the function of the weapon is elaborated upon—to quench all the fiery missiles. No fire is returned. Salvation is the helmet, and the Word of God is a sword.

There is yet one more important matter: prayer. "In the Spirit pray at all times. . . ." Paul asks for prayer for himself. "Pray that the word may be given to me to open my lips and in high spirits to make the secret known by proclaiming the gospel. For this cause I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may become frank and bold in my proclamation. For this I must be."

Lastly his thoughts go out to others. Tychicus is coming. He will tell you all.

We close our walk with Paul's prayer. "Peace and love with faith and grace be with all who love Christ with an imperishable and incorruptible love." With his example, look therefore carefully how you walk, not as unwise but as wise. Be filled with the Spirit."

Last in a series of 10

Gertrude Roten is assistant professor of Greek and New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

The vow of non-violence

Richard McSorley

On Aug. 6, 1985, in the Jesuit Community Chapel of Georgetown University, I took a vow of non-violence. The vow was received by G. Gordon Henderson as delegate for the rector of the community, who was away at the time. I was responding to the call of Pax Christi, U.S.A., to encourage all to take a public vow of non-violence as a way of recalling and reinstating in Catholic life the tradition of the first three centuries of our faith—the tradition of refusal to kill or be a part of the preparation to kill—in imitation of Jesus.

The hope of Pax Christi is that the vow will be repeated annually by a growing number on the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. Pax Christi members were asked to urge their bishops to hold public ceremonies for the vow, preceded by a retreat or days of prayer. Those looking for a faith-based and positive complement to the anti-nuclear and disarmament protests held on that day could find it in this public ceremony.

By doing this on the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, the vow is linked to the nuclear threat. That threat helped me and many others see the need of the vow. The fact of Christians killing each other in every war since the fourth century also helped me see the need of this vow.

Pax Christi was started after World War I by a French and a German bishop who wondered what had happened to the gospel during that war. The aim of Pax Christi is to bring the teaching of the gospel to life among Christians. This is more important than ever in the nuclear age.

In my formulation of the vow I said, "I, before the cross of Jesus Christ, vow perpetual non-violence in fulfillment of the command of your Son, 'Love your enemies.' " It seems to me beyond doubt that I cannot love a person in the same act in which I kill that person. The vow means I will not take part in killing anybody. That means I will not pay taxes for weapons of death and be a part of the preparations to kill done by the military or the hangman or the abortionist. Neither will I hold, as morally acceptable, the program of killing some to save others.

The formulation of the vow offered in *Pax Christi* (June 1985) expresses other applications: "I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus (1) by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life, (2) by accepting suffering rather than inflicting it, (3) by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence, (4) by persevering in non-violence of tongue and heart, (5) by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live, (6) by actively resisting evil and working non-violently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth."

It seems obvious that if many people took this vow and lived it out, the world would be better and peace would have a chance.

Richard McSorley is with the Center for Peace Studies at Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057.

Diary of a volunteer mediator

Paul Redekop

You get a phone call. "It's Ed, from Mediation Services."

You remember Ed. You mediated with him one bitter, cold January night. The case we were to mediate that night involved two old friends who had had a falling out to the point where one had pressed assault charges against the other. The complainant arrived on time but not the defendant. When you couldn't contact the latter by phone, the complainant offered to lead you to him. You agreed and were soon lost in a maze of apartments along Grant Avenue as this fellow led you from one apartment to another. You actually found the defendant, who informed you he wasn't available for mediation on that night, thank you very much, but did agree to meet with the complainant on another night.

"Hi, Ed. How are you?"

"Fine, thanks. How are you, Paul? Say, Paul, how would you like to mediate tomorrow night?"

"I think I'm free, Ed. What's up?"

This time it's a traffic case. One motorist felt he'd been cut off by another, pulled him over to the side of the road, opened his car door, gave him a thorough shaking and slugged him. Charges were laid. Now both parties have agreed to come to mediation services.

Somehow, before you arrive, you always conjure up images of these people on the basis of those brief descriptions of what has transpired. They must be rather large and of a violent disposition, scared perhaps. But they never quite live up to your expectations. In fact, they tend to be all too human. Perhaps it's the setting. A quiet room with comfortable chairs, a tasteful hanging on one wall and bookshelves along two others. Coffee is brewing in a pot in the corner.

For whatever reason, the people to be mediated are quiet when they first come in. You and your fellow mediator introduce yourselves (mediators always work in pairs). You get the people to make themselves comfortable, find a place to sit. You offer them coffee, make small talk for a few minutes, then begin.

You explain the basic rules of mediation: (1) The mediators are there not to pass judgment, not to decide who is right or wrong, not to reach an agreement for them, but to help *them* reach an agreement. And we will remain neutral in the process. (2) Whatever is said in a mediation session is completely confidential. We will be taking notes during the meeting, but these will be destroyed as soon as it is over.

You go on to explain the procedure that will be followed. Each party will have the chance to tell his or her side of the story without interruption by the other. We will go on from there to try to identify the most important issues, then work toward some kind of agreement.

You get someone to start. Then, after a moment's hesitation, the stories usually come bursting forth. The one who has started blurts out one story. There is anger, righteousness, outrage—defensiveness. When the stories have been told, the mediators ask the complainant and the perpetrator to go over what seem to be the most salient points. Once the key issues have been identified, the down-to-earth bargaining takes place until an agreement is reached.

All this, of course, is easier said than done. However, mediation services has a remarkable success rate. During one recent three-month period, agreements were achieved in 90 percent of the cases mediated.

The real work is done by the regular staff. They must obtain referrals from the police, the courts and various other sources. Then the people involved must be contacted and a meeting arranged. Making these arrangements may take many phone calls, much explaining, cajoling, encouraging and so on.

The volunteers come in once all this work and preparation has been done and get the job of seeing the case through.

A successful conclusion is an agreement that leaves both complainants and perpetrators better off than they were when they arrived and, more often than not, with a much better feeling toward one another than they came in with.

There is great need for mediation services in modern urban society. In smaller communities, the towns and villages from which we've all come more or less recently, members of the community would resolve their differences in a similar way. Often there would be a village elder to whom other members of the community could go for help with their disputes. Sometimes a neighbor would help out. If there was a police force in the community, its officers were usually members of the community themselves. If a crime was committed, they would know those involved and would often act to achieve some kind of reconciliation rather than having to press formal charges.

In the modern urban environment, law enforcement has for the most part become highly impersonal. The police officers must "go by the book" as they arrest perpetrators who are strangers to them and proceed to have charges laid. Both complainants and defendants find themselves in court, which operates on the basis of an adversarial model. If the defendant is found guilty, he or she will be fined or sent to prison. The complainant may get some small satisfaction from "seeing justice done," if by justice we mean only punishment. But the net result is a further rending in the fabric of the community. It is certainly not a healing.

Mediation provides an alternative to this harsh and impersonal system. It offers people who find themselves in conflict with one another the chance to genuinely resolve their conflict and gain a better understanding and respect for the person with whom they were in conflict. If a mediation is successful, a contribution has been made toward the equilibrium of the community which, as has been amply demonstrated, is never achieved through the imposition of fines or prison terms.

Paul Redekop is one of the volunteers who work with Mediation Services, 202-818 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3G 0N4.

Mediation (caring) in the name of Christ helps us to get other people into focus. When mistrust or conflict is allowed to grow, people become a blur or a target.

The Hymn Society of America has announced a search for new hymn texts related to the Advent season. This search aims at providing new hymns in contemporary, inclusive language based on Scripture from the three-year lectionary. Entries should be in four non-returnable copies and include a $5 entry fee for each hymn. Deadline for entries is May 1. Winning hymns will be announced in October and will be published by The Hymn Society of America, National Headquarters, Box 30854, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, TX 76129.

Mennonite Central Committee Canada and MCC British Columbia have urged the British Columbia government to deal honorably with the Haida Indians in their current conflict over rights on Lyell Island. Nine Haida band members were recently given suspended sentences for blockading a roadway and thereby defying a court order giving two logging companies the right to chop trees on this ruggedly beautiful West Coast island. The Haidas have always claimed Lyell as part of their ancestral heritage. Despite a 1972 federal decision, the provincial government refuses to recognize aboriginal land rights.

NEWS

CIM faces communications questions

Mission leaders discuss international mutuality

Techny, Ill. (Meetinghouse)—The challenges of establishing mutual relations in an international church occupied administrators of some 15 North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission and service agencies in Dec. 2-4, 1985, meetings of the Council of International Ministries.

Mission workers often have the chance to be outside "brokers" in conflict situations, suggested anthropologist Jacob Loewen. He shared case studies from his experience in cross-cultural ministries over the past 40 years. He challenged the group to be sensitive to local cultural forms of reconciliation, which he claimed are often more moral than Western techniques of mediation. Loewen further suggested that there are limits to administrators doubling as brokers in conflict, because they are often part of the conflict.

Mennonite World Conference reported on efforts to strengthen international communications through a network of correspondents to a new quarterly publication. The MWC initiative drew the support of news service people and several editors at the meeting. They drafted a proposal calling for the formation of traveling "communication teams." These teams, made up of North American journalists and communicators in other cultures, would try to link the church across cultures and to encourage indigenous forms of communication. The proposal further called for more independent reporting on the work of North American church agencies and for more international news in the North American Mennonite press.

Churches want to relate more directly rather than through mission agencies, reported a number of participants. The CIM sessions were dotted with reports of consultations in various continents: for example, a late January consultation of theologians on the Radical Reformation in Prague, a May meeting of the Asia Mennonite Conference and an upcoming Central American mission consultation.

One specific concern for Latin Americans is the need for more Spanish literature. They are starting to talk about establishing a "publishing corporation." So far Spanish publishing projects have been centered in the United States. CIM directed a portion of its $26,000 support for Spanish children's Anabaptist curriculum to further development of the publishing corporation idea.

In further business, CIM

- supported the idea of a Mennonite staff appointment to the Centre for New Religious Movements at Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham, England. This program will not be directly administered by CIM. Like the China Educational Exchange program, however, the Selly Oak appointment is an example of spin-off programs that involve clusters of CIM members.
- supplemented its own self-insurance program, the "major medical pool," with a commercial policy to handle large claims. The new $50,000 deductible policy allows for coverage up to $350,000, with a total maximum of $1 million for one person with three separate incidents.
- appointed Gerald Shenk, Jim Derstine and Ike Bergen to the Urbana '87 committee, which will plan Mennonite participation at this biennial student mission event. *Ron Rempel*

Teacher needed in Taiwan

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church is looking for a grade-school teacher to teach missionary children in Hwalien, Taiwan. A voluntary service term of two to three years including language study, beginning in August, is recommended.

Please contact:
Personnel Office
Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

Summer service opportunities

The Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church is accepting applications from young people interested in the overseas summer missions program. Volunteers are responsible to obtain their own financial support. COM will make all other arrangements.

For further information, contact:
Personnel Office
Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

About 100 church leaders from Australia, the United States, Canada and several European countries met at Harare, South Africa, Dec. 4-6, 1985, to express concern about the situation in South Africa and support their colleagues there. World Council of Churches General Secretary Emilio Castro, who called the meeting, said, "Apartheid goes against the texture of the spiritual reality of the universe. That's why it can't prevail."

At right, Bishop Desmond Tutu joins other leaders at Harare in prayer.

A new study says Mexican immigrants to the United States, both legal and illegal, contribute more to the economy than they take out through public assistance. The Rand Corporation document said fewer than 5 percent of all Mexican immigrants are on welfare, though there is a pressing need for improved educational opportunities for all Latinos.

Mission leaders look at 're-evangelization' of Europe

Techny, Ill. (Meetinghouse)—This may be a "special moment" for Europe, concluded Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission administrators after a two-day consultation here Dec. 2-3, 1985, preceding the fall meeting of the Council of International Ministries. Discussion focused on evangelism in a secular, "post-Christian" Europe.

The consultation, called by CIM's Europe area committee (formerly called the East-West task force), included representatives from six North American and two European groups. Volker Horsch represented the International Mennonite Organization and Raymond Eyer the European Mennonite Evangelization Committee.

The consultation included two major presentations analyzing European culture. Roelf Kuitse, professor of missions at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., traced the growth of secularism. Paul Peachey, a sociologist from Washington, suggested that the secular and the sacred are not necessarily opposites but two related impulses in modern society. Secular impulses, for example, free individuals to be agents of change in society; the sacred impulses work for integration.

"The sectarian tradition," suggested Peachey, "sets us up to be privatistic and to let God take care of society. . . . How will the sacred become again a community-forming impulse?"

The wide-ranging discussions kept coming back to the question What should the church be doing in Europe? Starting new churches? Working in existing churches and educational institutions? Being "present" in renewal movements, such as the peace movement, charismatic groups in state churches or regional councils of churches (a kind of "local ecumenicity")?

Volker Horsch stressed the need for more awareness of and contact with European Mennonites. He acknowledged that many European Mennonites do not have a missionary vision. "It's a rather ethnic thing," he commented. "But I observe a similar ethnicity here [in North America]."

Raymond Eyer said that European churches continue to look to North America for clarity on the Anabaptist vision. Northern Europeans and Dutch, he suggested, are influenced by rationalism and therefore are no longer Anabaptist. The south Europeans are influenced by pietism and are also no longer Anabaptist. He observed a similar split in North America.

In reviewing European-based programs, the administrators were embarrassed to discover a number of unrelated mission initiatives in Portugal. "Are we trying to enlarge our empire or to give a witness?" asked several participants. A "Portugual" lunch was convened in order to talk about the possibilities of a unified Mennonite presence.

The discussions on evangelism in Europe will continue at this May's meetings of CIM. *Ron Rempel*

Mission support lagging, according to survey

Techny, Ill. (Meetinghouse)—The contribution graph slopes up, however slightly; the personnel graph slopes down.

This was the general picture that emerged from a recent survey of North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission and service agencies that cooperate through the Council of International Ministries. The survey was compiled by Wilbert R. Shenk, secretary of CIM since 1973 and vice president of Mennonite Board of Missions (Mennonite Church) overseas ministries division. He reported his findings to the Dec. 2-4, 1985, CIM meetings held here.

With figures supplied by partner agencies, Shenk traced both contribution and personnel patterns over the past 19 years. During this period, the combined receipts increased from $5.2 million in 1966 to $26.7 million in 1985—an average of 22 percent per year. When these figures were translated into "1967 constant dollars," however, the increase amounted to only 3.5 percent per year.

By contrast, the total number of people serving in these programs is slowly declining. In 1966 the total was 1,462; now it is 1,318.

Within the general picture there was considerable variation between agencies. Five had less income (measured by the 1967 constant dollar) in 1966 than in 1985. Mennonite Board of Missions (Mennonite Church), for example, reported an overall 28 percent drop in income. The General Conference's Commission on Overseas Mission income dropped 1.5 percent.

Eight showed increases (in 1967 constant dollars). Mennonite Central Committee reported the largest increase over 19 years—about 292 percent.

All but three of the agencies have fewer people in service now than in 1966. The Evangelical Mennonite Church (Canada) Board of Missions reported the largest increase—from 42 people in 1966 to 100 now. Most of this increase has come since 1979. *Ron Rempel*

Amsterdam 86, the second International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, is scheduled for July 12-21. Sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the conference is planned to bring together more than 8,000 itinerant evangelists, most of them from developing countries. Because space and funds are limited, prospective invitees must undergo a complex selection process. More than 41,000 applications have been sent out.

The Bluffton (Ohio) College board of trustees approved an all-denomination church-college matching scholarship fund program, along with seven new named scholarships at its fall meeting Nov. 23, 1985. The college will now match up to $500 per academic year in funds provided by any congregation that has student members attending the college, regardless of financial need. With the addition of six new scholarships the college now has 44 such endowed scholarships available to qualifying students, in addition to its regular scholarship program.

West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., held a Jubilee celebration on Nov. 24, 1985. Two boys, Trevor Ens and Leonard Krahn, unrolled a scroll. Then Wes Dyck blew a ram's horn. Alvin Ens read Leviticus 25:8-13 and asked the members of the church to celebrate the Year of Jubilee. Paul Boschman, pastor, spoke on "Jubilee—a Time for Renewal." He said that the Hebrew word "yobel" means "freedom-salvation" and challenged the church to let Scripture speak in a new way in the coming year. West Abbotsford Church was born Nov. 15, 1936, and the church plans to celebrate 50 years July 11-13.

Linscheid named communications director, begins July 1

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—David A. Linscheid, 32, has accepted an appointment to become communications director for the General Conference Mennonite Church. He succeeds Larry A. Cornies and will begin his new task on July 1.

Coming from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., where he was director of admissions, Linscheid will oversee conference publications, public relations and congregational contacts. He is a 1975 graduate of Bethel College in psychology and drama and studied German in Vienna. After college he worked at Prairie View Mental Health Center and for Jim Stucky Photographics, both in Newton.

"I am comfortable saying that I feel called to this job," says Linscheid. "The church has played a positive role in my background. It excites me to carry that on. My time overseas brought a new appreciation for my spiritual roots."

Linscheid has participated in local church activities (in Goessel, Kan.), in the Western District Conference, at triennial conference sessions at Estes Park in 1980 and as a member of a "drama pilgrimage" troupe for Mennonite Voluntary Service.

A member of Bethel College Mennonite Church, he is married to Cynthia Lehman Linscheid, and they are parents of two young sons, Aaron and Joel.

MCC BC executive director

Applications are invited for the position of executive director for MCC BC.
- —Position opens early 1986, appointment time flexible
- —Salary commensurate with MCC policy

Qualifications:
- —a scriptural understanding that combines a word-and-deed expression;
- —proven administrative experience, with a service record desirable;
- —apt communication skills.

Apply by Feb. 28 to:
Personnel Committee, MCC BC
Box 2038
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8
(604) 859-4141.

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Part-time pastor needed

Philippi Mennonite Church, a small ministry-oriented fellowship in rural West Virginia, seeks a part-time pastor, effective immediately.

Duties include sharing spiritual leadership, representing the church to the community, and counseling.

Qualifications: seminary training preferred; biblical studies background acceptable. Housing and a small stipend provided; supplemental income will be necessary.

For further information contact:
Lois Harder
Work: (304) 457-1700, ext. 240
Home: (304) 457-2506

Elvin Kreider
Work: (304) 457-2800
Home: (304) 457-2987.

When one small Mennonite church in Japan took up a Christmas offering in 1984 for evangelism in Africa it created unusual interest. "We see so much on television of the starving millions in Africa," said Junji Sasaki, pastor of the Oita Mennonite Church, "but when we discussed what to do with our offering, someone suggested, 'People need food for the stomach, and many people are helping the famine. But what about food for their eternal souls?' " One of the church's members, Richard Derksen, and his wife, Marilyn, are General Conference missionaries in Zaire.

The chance for dialogue with leaders of other major Christian denominations drew some 35 people, including Mennonite World Conference executive secretary Paul Kraybill, to Windsor Castle in England in November 1985 for three days of meetings. The annual Secretaries of Christian World Communions sessions bring together representatives from such bodies as the Baptist World Alliance, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, World Evangelical Fellowship, Lutheran World Federation and others.

The Evangelical Mennonite Church of Colombia brought together three other groups Nov. 18-20, 1985, for the first National Seminar on Anabaptism. Joining their hosts for study and reflection were the Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren and Mennonite Brethren. Emphasis was on their common background stemming from the Radical Reformation of the 16th century, and the stated purpose was to foster unity among the four groups.

Colombian Christians recall disaster relief experience

Cachipay, Colombia (GCMC)—When Volcano Ruiz erupted on Nov. 13, 1985, taking 25,000 lives and destroying the city of Armero, the people of Popayan, another Colombian city, remembered. *Their* town was devastated by an earthquake during Easter week 1983. It was then that a local church leader in Popayan, confronted with an offer of a "door-to-door" evangelistic campaign, responded with, "But that is not what Popayan needs right now. What the city needs is what the Mennonites are doing. We need sympathy and works of charity, love that manifests itself in service."

Disaster service was hard for some of the local people to understand. Surely God wanted them to evangelize and make their church grow. In the aftermath of the earthquake tragedy the conservative Catholic community was suddenly more open to talking about spiritual things. Church growth had always been difficult in the tradition-bound community of Popayan. It seemed important to seize the opportunity and preach the gospel at this time of openness rather than take up a shovel and help clean up the rubble.

Into this setting, in 1983, the first group of Mennonite volunteers arrived from various Colombian Mennonite churches to demonstrate love and faith in action. In all, four groups of volunteers made the long trip to the disaster area to help needy families get their lives together again by disposing of rubble, cleaning salvageable bricks and rebuilding homes. It was the first Mennonite Disaster Service experiment in Colombia—a new witness of Christian discipleship to the evangelical and Catholic communities.

A woman and two children weep at the Colombian town of Armero Nov. 16, 1985, as efforts to find survivors of the mud slide continued.

Two years later many groups responded to the pleas for help after Volcano Ruiz erupted. Of the local groups, the best-equipped disaster workers were from Popayan. It took them a whole day to arrive at the scene of the disaster, but once they were there they were prepared to pitch in and help wherever needed. Their primary purpose was not to evangelize but to serve. Their Christian witness, however, spoke powerfully to many people.

I was in that first Mennonite group that served in Popayan 2½ years ago. Last week in Armero and in the refugee camps I personally witnessed the service given by the Popayan Christians who had been moved to help others by the help they had received from us. The spirit of service as taught by Jesus in Matthew 25:40 had come full circle. *George Ediger*

George R. Ediger is a businessman from Inman, Kan., and a former missionary to Colombia under the General Conference. He is in Colombia for three months to direct volcano relief at the invitation of the Mennonite churches.

Research interns needed

Three positions assisting FCNL's lobbyists with legislative work. These are 11-month paid assignments beginning **Sept. 1, 1986**. Duties include research, writing, monitoring issues, attending hearings and coalition meetings, maintaining clipping and issue files. Applications close **March 15**.

For information write or call:
Friends Committee on National Legislation
245 Second St. NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 547-6000.

Administrator wanted

The board of directors of **Herbert Nursing Home Inc.**, owned and operated by the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan, are seeking an administrator for this 54-bed, level 111 facility. Duties to commence tentatively **April 1**.

Applicant must be mature Christian whose faith would be in harmony with those of the owning body.

Experience in long-term care would be an asset, preferably with some training in the field. The applicant should have an understanding of accounting principles and the budgetary process. Ability to communicate in both English and German is desirable. Starting salary is negotiable.

Deadline for applications is **Feb. 20**. Direct inquiries to (306) 784-2661. Applications with full resume should be submitted to:
Albert Jahnke, chairman
Herbert Nursing Home
Box 520
Herbert, SK S0H 2A0.

The General Conference will use a $24,000 fraternal grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind., to help fund Mennonite Encyclopedia Volume V and a communications director for the denomination. Four other projects will share the grant: the church's 125th anniversary observance, a conference minister shared by the Central District and Illinois Conference, leadership development in Paraguay and evangelism training for Hispanic leaders.

With Camp Squeah as a setting, about 85 women participated in the British Columbia Women in Mission retreat Oct. 4-6, 1985. Guest speaker Stephanie Fast of White Rock, B.C., used her own story, beginning with being an unwanted, abused, Korean-American street orphan, to develop the theme "Created for Destiny" and to emphasize each individual's self-worth. About 58 women attended a second retreat at Camp Squeah Oct. 18-20, 1985. Diane Moe of Langley, B.C., spoke on "Speaking Positively."

"We wish all the ministers of our denomination could take the workshop." "Can you do another for our church on the national level?" These and similar expressions were voiced by the 31 pastors who had been part of the broadcasting workshops conducted recently by Henry Unrau, Mennonite Ministries worker in Botswana. Unrau, coordinator of religious programming for Radio Botswana, held two workshops in Gaborone and one in Francistown. Sponsored by the General Conference Commission on Overseas Mission, the Unraus have been in Botswana since 1978 under the auspices of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Housing project begins in Chile in response to earthquake

Santiago, Chile (MCC)—"We are helping people who have been not only victims of the earthquake but in a greater sense have been victims of their lot in life," write Charles and Linda Geiser, Mennonite Central Committee workers in Chile who are heading up a housing construction program in Santa Clara.

Santa Clara is a community located about an hour and a half from Santiago, where thousands of poor people live in dilapidated houses. Most laborers in Santa Clara earn between $1 and $2 a day for farm work.

When the earthquake hit early in 1985, many of their houses were damaged and destroyed, making an already serious housing shortage even more of a hardship for these slum residents.

The Geisers, who are from Apple Creek, Ohio, moved into the first house built with MCC and Mennonite Board of Missions housing construction funds in late October 1985. Since then several crews of six to 12 local residents have been hard at work building houses for their families and neighbors in Santa Clara. The Geisers say that most of the work is done in the evenings and on weekends, since many residents work on nearby large farms.

Plans call for the building of 65 new houses and repairs on at least 12 more houses in the neighborhood. MCC is purchasing a small plot of land for several families who are now camping out on the community square.

At the first meeting of about 70 residents, the Geisers divided workers into groups responsible for work on houses in their section of the neighborhood. A housing committee was formed of representatives from each group. Each family who was slated to receive a house signed a contract in which they pledged to pay 1,000 Chilean pesos (about $5 U.S.) a month toward the costs of materials. Money collected in this way will be used to build a community center and other community projects.

Chilean workers put up walls on house being rebuilt as part of MCC's housing construction program in Santa Clara. Hundreds of residents in this slum near Santiago were left without housing after the May 1985 earthquake hit Chile.

The Geisers report that they have been asked to work through some of the tougher cases involving helping groups decide how much work families receiving the houses need to do, what kind of houses should be built or repairs done, and whether some people qualify for new houses or repairs. But the building committee has handled most of these decisions without the Geisers' help.

The groups then met to decide on work plans and which houses would be built first. The Geisers explain, "Those who had greatest need were put at the top of the list and the rest decided by lottery." The Geisers then met with each of the groups to present building plans for the new houses.

The Geisers met several times with local city officials to get approval for the building. They write, "One official wanted to know what we were doing in the community, what our role was and if we were organizing the people."

MCC is providing $66,500 for the Santa Clara building project in 1986. MCC and MBM are looking for one other neighborhood in which to begin a housing construction project in early 1986. In the weeks immediately after the May earthquake MCC and MBM provided emergency assistance, including pastoral services and financial assistance to cottage industries and small businesses to help them get back on their feet.

Christopher E. Moser, a 1985 graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College, received the Youth Recognition Award for Peace Dec. 4, 1985. The award was presented by Governor Richard Celeste as part of Ohio's celebration of the United Nation's International Youth Year. The youth year was proclaimed as a time to focus on and highlight the contributions of young people, ages 15-24, and included the themes of participation, development and peace. Moser was nominated by First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, in the peace category. He is serving a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment at a refugee camp in Honduras.

Jon M. Harshbarger, a 24-year-old Church of the Brethren member from North Manchester, Ind., was convicted Nov. 15, 1985, in Fort Wayne, Ind., for refusing to register for the draft. Harshbarger was sentenced to two years probation at the Washington (D.C.) City Church of the Brethren's nutrition program for street people. He was fined $1,500 plus court costs. Harshbarger, who first refused to register in 1980, said, "Selective Service registration, to me, is a military program. As a Christian . . . I can't participate in it."

Thirty-seven first-year students have begun studies at ISTK, the Institute for Higher Theological Education in Kinshasa, Zaire. The school is a joint effort of a half dozen denominations, including the Mennonite Community of Zaire (CMZ) and the Zaire Mennonite Brethren. Peter Falk of the Commission on Overseas Mission serves as director.

'Wonder bean' promoted by MCC agriculturists in Zambia

Mkushi, Zambia (MCC)—When David and Barbara Wynne moved to the Mkushi District in Zambia in 1982, only five village families grew soybeans. But three years later 1,855 families grew soybeans, and 80 percent of the families surveyed by Dave said they used soybeans in their diet.

The Wynnes say this increase is surprising, since eating patterns change slowly, and many Zambians complain that the soybean does not taste good.

The Wynnes of Lexington, Ky., are Mennonite Central Committee agriculturists working with the Zambian Ministry of Agriculture to promote soybean cultivation and use in the Mkushi District. The project is jointly funded by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, MCC and the Zambian Ministry of Agriculture.

The Wynnes do much of their soybean promotion at village meetings. David teaches how to grow soybeans, and Barbara demonstrates recipes such as soy milk and soy coffee, emphasizing the nutritional benefits of eating soybeans. "You can't divorce utilization and production," says David.

They invite women and men to the meeting. Women do the planting and most of the weeding and harvesting and therefore need to learn about soybean production. In the same manner, although women are responsible for cooking, men often have the final word on what is eaten.

The Wynnes adapt their recipes to fit traditional dishes to encourage acceptance by villagers. Sometimes the adaption may simply be changing the name of the food. "To come to the village level, you may have to call soy milk 'soy mkoyo,' " explains David. The Bemba people do not keep cattle or drink milk, but they do drink a millet beverage flavored with a root called Mkoyo.

SOYABEAN
NUTRITION
PRODUCTION

Hilda Sinbkomba, Zambian Home Economics officer for Mkushi District, works with David Wynne at a soybean nutrition booth promoting the use and production of soybeans among villagers at the Chicupili Agricultural Fair.

The villagers like the recipes. One villager, Stephen Mwape, put it simply: "I eat soybeans because they're delicious."

"I was taught recipes by a friend after I had been served a delicious cup of coffee," says F. N. Phiri who now makes soy milk and soy coffee regularly. Phiri saved 50 pounds of beans for consumption from last year's harvest. Some families save over 100 pounds for home consumption.

The Wynnes say that villagers serve them soy coffee—roasted ground soybeans boiled in water—more than any other beverage. A corn bread recipe, using soy milk, is also popular. Some women even bake the bread for sale.

Villagers have become more aware of nutrition through Barbara's presentations. Most families who eat soybeans see an improvement in their family's health, especially among the young children. Phiri says, "My children have become more round and healthy."

Soybeans increase the farming family's income. For some, soybeans produce more income than the traditional major cash crop, corn. Christ Mbulo, a Mkushi agriculturist, said that some people "just grow corn for home consumption. They have switched to soybeans [as a cash crop] because they are less work."

The village farmers in Mkushi have done so well that the national seed company, Zamseed, has commissioned them to produce seed for them in 1986. David and government-sponsored agricultural extensionists will monitor those selected for seed production.

Another reason for growing the "wonder bean," as David calls it, is its long-term effect on soil fertility. Traditional corn crops are hard on the soil. "Corn grown year after year depletes the soil to the point that the soil no longer produces crops," says David. "We think it is important that the small-scale farmers are introduced to soybeans as a crop to rotate with corn. Rotation is traditional, and we have found soybeans fit this rotation system better than any other leguminous crop, such as peanuts and sugar beans."

In addition to his work with soybean extension, David produced the first soybean cookbook for Zambia. He also teaches vegetable gardening, and promotes a reflector oven which conserves precious wood fuel. In addition to nutrition and cooking work, Barbara has taught sewing to women's groups. Both Barbara and David are deacons at the local Apostolic Faith Mission Church.

The Wynnes have worked in Zambia for four years now. They plan on finishing their term in 1987. Already they are thinking of ways to turn their work over to local people. A Zambian woman has recently taken over Barbara's work in teaching new recipes and nutrition. *Jan Preheim*

John Fehr, General Conference missionary in Uruguay, has been asked to begin a new church in Montevideo. He will move to the capital city from Las Piedra, where he has worked in discipleship ministries for two years. The Evangelization Board, which comprises representatives of the Spanish-speaking and German-speaking Mennonite conferences of Uruguay, met Nov. 16, 1985, and made this decision.

In Zaire, Bible institute students are conducting services in the local prison at Tshikapa. The Kalonda "Institut Biblique" students, under the leadership of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker Mary Epp, have a ministry that combines a spiritual program with food assistance for the prisoners. "If we bring a program we must also bring food to these starving people," the students said. "Otherwise our testimony will not sound authentic." Mary, who has been instructor at the Kalonda Bible Institute since 1980, is sponsored by the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Mennonite Farm Neighbours has begun collecting animal fodder and funds to help troubled farmers in Saskatchewan. The organization, a volunteer group sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, plans to ship fodder to the neighboring province via the Saskatchewan Farm Neighbors and distribute it through local committees established in 12 communities hard hit by poor crops. Drought, grasshoppers, wheat midge, diamond black moths, numerous diseases and even floods have taken their toll on normally profitable operations. The SFN says many farmers are now in dire need of animal fodder.

CALENDAR

Feb. 28-March 4—Council of Commissions, Newton, Kan.

May 15-18—Festival of Worship, Goshen, Ind.

July 21-27—General Conference Triennial Sessions, Saskatoon, theme: "Thy Kingdom Come"

Canada

Feb. 21-22—Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, Carman

Feb. 21-23—Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, Abbotsford

Feb. 28-March 1—Conference of Mennonites in Saskatchewan, Waldheim

March 14-16—Conference of Mennonites in Ontario, Waterloo

March 21-23—Conference of Mennonites in Alberta

July 4-8—Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Waterloo, Ont.

DEATHS

Harold Thiessen, Snohomish, Wash., died Jan. 2. Between 1946 and 1968 he pastored General Conference congregations in Middlebury, Ind.; Donnelson, Iowa; and Summerfield, Ill. Since 1970 he had been medically retired as a result of Huntington's Disease. He is survived by his wife, Marie, six children, one brother and two sisters.

MINISTERS

Mike Bogard, interim pastor at Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., has accepted a permanent pastorate there.

Truman Brunk has completed his pastorate at Akron (Pa.) Church.

Susan Ortman Goering will be ordained Feb. 16 at Arvada (Colo.) Church.

Waldo Kaufman is interim pastor at Calvary Church, Liberal, Kan.

Timothy Kliewer was installed as pastor of First Church, Paso Robles, Calif., on Jan. 12.

C. Nevin Miller is interim pastor at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Mark Wiens is associate pastor at Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind.

Floyd Zuercher became pastor at Walton (Kan.) Church in December 1985.

WORKERS

Henry and *Susan Gerbrandt* began a short-term assignment on Jan. 4 as mission volunteers with the Commission on Overseas Mission in Mexico. They are living in Swift Colony, giving pastoral leadership to the Burwalde Mennonite congregation.

Isbrand Hiebert, Elim Church, Loma Plata, Paraguay, began a one-year MCC term in Winnipeg, working in the MCC Canada Peace and Social Concerns office. He received a bachelor's degree from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and a bachelor's degree in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, in Winnipeg. He and his wife, Martha, have four children, Iris, Detlef, Vincent and Violette.

Edna and *Paul Hunsberger*, Goshen, Ind., have been appointed as hosts of the Brubacher House museum by Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont. Their assignment will begin next fall.

Stephen "Tig" and *Karen Flueckiger Intagliata*, COM missionaries in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, returned to Berne, Ind., in December due to the severe illness and death of Karen's mother, Irene Flueckiger. They will stay here on North America Assignment for one year, living in Pasadena, Calif., where Tig will study at Fuller Theological Seminary. They have one son, Andrew.

McKitricks

Art Klassen, First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, began a two-year MCC term at New Hamburg, Ont. He is an administrator for the MCC SELFHELP store there. He received a degree in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg.

MCC Canada added three new workers to the staff in Winnipeg: *Harold Koslowsky* is the Overseas Services assistant; *Agnes Hubert* and *Barry Nolan* are providing general assistance in administering the China Educational Exchange program and are serving with the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped.

Eva Martens, Crystal City (Man.) Church, began a three-month MCC term at SELFHELP Crafts and the material aid center in Ephrata, Pa.

Royce and *Marlene Klassen McKitrick*, Mennonite Brethren Church, Marion, Kan., began a one-year MVS term as resident managers of Yarrow Gardens Apartments in Arvada, Colo. They are graduates of the University of Illinois and Goshen (Ind.) College,

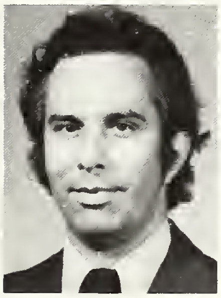
A new emphasis on Russian Mennonite studies is taking shape at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont. Coordinating the effort on a part-time basis is Leonard Friesen, a doctoral student in Russian history at the University of Toronto. According to Rodney Sawatsky, acting president, this new emphasis has three objectives: to give the Mennonite experience in Russia the attention it warrants, to record and describe that experience "in such a way as to be of value to those within and outside that tradition" and to use the Mennonites as a window "to view the Imperial Russia of yesterday and the Soviet Union of today."

An appeal from East and West German theologians, activists and members of the Protestant church leadership in the two countries says, "We welcome the Soviet Union's test halt (of nuclear weapons) as a political initiative which breaks the dynamic of the arms race, thereby creating a condition for its renewal." The signers also urge the Soviets to extend their moratorium on nuclear weapons testing. "We call on the United States to respond immediately to the Soviet halt in testing by stopping its own nuclear weapons testing," the statement continues.

The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Office of Criminal Justice and Mennonite Steering Committee on Corrections are compiling a directory of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in the United States who are involved in prison ministry. The goal is to encourage networking and mutual support. If you are involved in prison ministry or know someone who is, contact Al Wengerd, MCC U.S. Office of Criminal Justice, 220 W. High St., Elkhart, IN 46516, (219) 293-3090.

RECORD

Peery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respectively. Her parents are Donald and Lenora Klassen of Rocky Ford, Colo. They have four children.

Goldie Miller, Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., began a two-year MCC term in Ephrata, Pa., as a cook in the SELFHELP Crafts tea room. Her stepmother is Helen Gering of Freeman. Her children are Arlen and Steve Miller and Jessie Peters.

Bertha Mountford, Oak Grove Church, Smithville, Ohio, began a three-month MCC term in Ephrata, Pa., as a cashier at the SELFHELP Crafts shop.

Larry W. Newswanger, Mutual Aid Minister at Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind., has resigned effective Feb. 28.

Penny Peery, Sinking Springs Presbyterian Church, began a two-year MVS term as church community worker at Welcome Inn in Hamilton, Ont. She received a degree in social work from Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va. Her parents are Carl and Charlotte Peery.

Evelyn Riediger, Peace Church, Richmond, B.C., has terminated a short-term COM/Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission assignment in Burkina Faso.

Erick Sawatzky began as director of field education at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., Jan. 1.

Wiebe

David Shelly was appointed to a new position as editor of Mennonite World Conference publications on Dec. 1, 1985. He is serving half time with MWC and half time for *Mennonite Weekly Review* in Newton, Kan. In two years he will assume full-time duties in Lombard, Ill., with MWC.

Marjorie Olson Stucky, Fort Collins (Colo.) Church, is the new Foundation Series resource person for the Western District Conference.

Walter Unger, instructor and academic dean of Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C., was appointed president of CBC in November 1985.

Carla Wiebe, Zoar Church, Waldheim, Sask., began an MVS term as a child-care worker in Liberal, Kan. Her parents are Tina and the late Albert Wiebe of Waldheim.

Rosemary Wyse, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., is at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India, for five months assisting in the library and teaching English. She is sponsored by the Commission on Overseas Mission.

WHEN we understand the actual plight of our contemporaries . . . share their suffering, THEN we shall be able to proclaim the Word of God. Jacques Ellul

mennonite voluntary service

For information on service assignments contact:

Mennonite Voluntary Service

Box 347, Newton, KS 67114 / 316-283-5100

“If you want to preach only to our souls, go to the place of the dead. That is the only place where body and soul are separate. Here on earth to reach my soul, you cannot neglect my body.”

Pastor Samuel Yameogo, director of Federation of Evangelical Churches in Burkina Faso and partner in MCC work

Express God's love in your word and deed. Volunteer for a term of service with MCC. For a list of personnel openings and qualifications write to:

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th St.
Box M
Akron, PA 17501

MCC Canada
201-1483 Pembina Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8

LETTERS

Amen to prophecy

Re: "An Advent Prophecy" by Darrell Ediger (Dec. 10, 1985, issue) . . . Amen! *Winona Rempel, 673 Patricia Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3T 3A8*

Dec. 17

Commend integrity article

This is to commend you most highly for your excellent article, "Integrity at Funerals" (Dec. 10, 1985, issue). This must have taken a little (prayerful) courage to refer to a number of specific instances, from which the ministers referred to will be able to identify themselves—I hope.

It reminds me of the widow who, at her husband's funeral, walked to the front and looked into the open casket to see if it really was her husband in there whom the preacher was eulogizing.

It reminds me also of the late John Plenert, an early minister at the Hutchinson Mennonite Church, who told of a funeral he had had at East (or West) Swamp Church in Pennsylvania of a young Christian girl whose father was not a Christian but was converted at the funeral. He then became a soul-winning preacher at one of those churches. He is now with the Lord.

I would like to tell you of the funeral of a man here in First Mennonite Church, who was killed in a motorcycle accident. Over 30 motorcyclists—men and women—in leather jackets came. It was a wonderful opportunity for a strong evangelical sermon. *C. B. Friesen, 415 East First, Newton, KS 67114*

Dec. 18

It is a concern

With deep personal concern I read of the involvement of Beatrice Church persons with "Christian Identity" (Dec. 24, 1985, issue). *Grace Moyer Frounfelker, Box 3, Forksville, PA 18616*

Jan. 6

Sexuality like ice cream

It is incredible to me that in the Western District Forum on Homosexuality and in the reporting (Dec. 24, 1985, issue) sexuality is treated much as one's choice of ice cream flavor.

The Bible expresses itself no more clearly on any issue (not even on salvation itself) than in its condemnation of homosexuality. It is not the only or the worst of sins. Still, this does not give anyone license to condone it. How can we act in the 20th century as though there is no such thing as exegesis (the science of interpretation)?

Those who use passages about Jonathan and David's friendship in order to attempt a sanction of homosexuality only prove the inadequacy in their interpretation. And to say our Lord had homosexual relations with anyone is so blasphemous as to call into question the conversion of the ones who suggest it.

It is popular to confuse homosexuality and deep, abiding friendship between two people of the same sex. These are not the same thing. We are afflicted by the modern association of love with sex. The Bible records many deep friendships between men, for instance, and the New Testament encourages us to love one another. But a homosexual relationship means a love affair between two of the same sex (or the desire for such an affair, if we take the Sermon on the Mount seriously). This is a denial and destruction of God's creation order—expressly condemned by the New Testament.

It was particularly a problem, for instance, at Corinth. And to Corinth Paul wrote, "Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be deceived: neither fornicators (pornoi) . . . nor the effeminate, nor homosexuals . . . will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9). The words for "effeminate" (malakoi) and "homosexual" (arsenokoita) stress the active and passive homosexual roles. It is well for Mennonites to note that the New Testament places more emphasis upon sexual morality for Christians than it does on nonviolence.

We must not confuse ethics with counseling. Those tempted by homosexuality can be approached with love and extended the healing offered by Jesus. However, that does not mean we must soften our ethical stance in order to facilitate counseling and/or conversion. Our Lord is our example here: stricter than any Pharisee in his ethical stance (e.g. on adultery, divorce), yet ready to receive repentant sinners gladly. Remember that we are commanded to love our neighbor only after the first and greatest commandment: to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. I urge you to present this side of the issue to your readers—the biblical perspective—for the sake of Christ's church and without fear of what any factions may do or think. *Terence Paige, M.C.S., 7720 Guide Meridian, Lynden, WA 98264*

Jan. 7

Look to mystical

"God Can Work Fast," by Jacob Enz (Dec. 10, 1985, issue) was like an early Christmas present. (It was miraculous that Canada Post got that issue here by Dec. 17—seven calendar days.)

The fact that miracles happen is often lost on us as we get more and more "muppified." Our current brand of Anabaptism is tending toward rational statements devoid of emotion. We leave that for our music making. Jacob Enz' experience is a breath of fresh air. It confirms that God continues to work in mysterious ways and that prayer to God is communication with a Personal Beyond.

While the decision to embark on a life's voyage with God should to a great extent be done in a clear-headed fashion—using one's rational powers—it is often our emotions that drive us. God has created us in such a way that we can respond in a number of ways unless we let ourselves be trained to walk along narrow streets of experience only. We deprive most of all ourselves when we live in one sphere only.

Those who respond to miraculous healings by listing a catalogue of episodes where such did not happen probably also look upon the Almighty as one gigantic robot who responds when one pushes a button. But the miracle in the situation where there is no obvious physical healing may be in the circle of love from fellow Christians which surrounds the suffering one. Harold Kushner makes that point poignantly in *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. We should look at our life of faith as long-term investment given to long-term results. Eternal truths begin to spring on us now; their full clarity will reach us in many cases in the eons ahead.

Let us learn in our congregations to give greater credence to the mystical realities of prayer and God's healing, in whatever way these realities manifest themselves. *Lorne R. Buhr, 716 Knottwood Road S., Edmonton, AB T6K 1W5*

Jan. 7

Editor's journal jottings—2

From Oct. 24-Dec. 2, 1985, I visited Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, Colombia and Panama. This included a 2½-week preaching assignment in Paraguay. In this issue of The Mennonite *I share the second in a series of three sets of notes recorded in my daily diary during those days.* Bernie Wiebe

Thursday, Nov. 7
Today we visited the Yalwa Sanga Indian Center. The residential school has over 100 students ranging up to seventh grade (in age some are past 20 and already married). Students are made up of children of the Mennonite workers, native Paraguayans and of children from various Indian groups. They also have a Bible school here. Foreman ("Evaschuld") at Yalwa Sanga is Hans Teichroeb, a native Lengua Indian, who attended Mennonite World Conference at Wichita, Kan., and preached in over 40 GC churches. (He speaks a flawless Low German.)

Friday, Nov. 8
I chauffeured my cousins' car as we drove to the 60 (South Menno). Visited all day with my other cousins, Cornelius and Maria Sawatzky, along with their daughter Tina, at Rudnerweide. We did a lot of reminiscing together about relatives. No electricity on their place. Evening service at Grönau Church, where Abe Hiebert, son-in-law to the Sawatzkys, is one of the ministers.

Saturday, Nov. 9
Today is the official farewell for the Spencer Quartet and myself. I don't find farewells easy and this one is no different. Time of warm fellowship and good food under the stars.

Sunday, Nov. 10
Service at the first church built by Mennonites in the Chaco—Osterwick. A fitting conclusion to our series of 25 services in 2½ weeks. Temperatures have been well over 100° F these days.

Tuesday, Nov. 12
Two Commission on Overseas Mission staff people, Glendon Klaassen and Jeannie Zehr, have arrived in the Chaco. This morning was spent in official sessions of the Mennonite Missions Committee for Paraguay (MMKfP). The partnership between MMKfP and COM has been significant to date. COM still contributes to the budget (22 percent for 1986—$26,000) but on a decreasing scale and mainly for leadership training. A big problem this year has been the double-digit inflation in Paraguay (Guarani went from 200/$1 U.S. to 700/$1 U.S. within 1985). Program includes Indian ministries and other outreach.

One leadership training proposal approved was for Gundolf Niebuhr to study at Elkhart, Ind., in further preparation for serving among the Indians.

Wednesday, Nov. 13
Two significant experiences in addition to visiting CEMTA (the center for Mennonite theological education in Asunción), where they were preparing for commencement.

Visited Kilometer 81, the hospital and leprosarium located 81 km out of Asunción. They still have 40-45 people with leprosy in residence. Here the "curse" of leprosy is being released, and patients are anxious to talk. One said he found healing because of the "shoemaker" who made shoes so he could walk comfortably. Another pointed to the chapel and said, "I'm happy because of God." A beautiful thought—healing because of God and God's people.

Saw the new Mennonite church in Asunción. Was reminded that in Paraguay the GCs, MBs and EMBs essentially do things *together*. They go separate ways mainly for the "Gemeindestund" (special times for the membership).

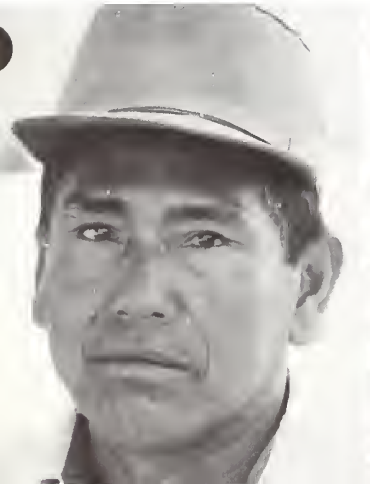
Friday, Nov. 15
Left Paraguay behind with many beautiful memories. Not so good was that I managed to catch a cold in its heat.

Arrived in Montevideo, Uruguay, today. Together with COM missionary John Fehr, Glendon Klaassen and Jeannie Zehr, we drove out to Delta Colony (about 120 km away) to visit German Mennonites. They are of Danzig background.

Came back to the former Mennonite seminary campus for the night. It is now a Mennonite study center. I sleep in the former music classroom.

Oh yes, we went to an ice cream store recommended by John Fehr. The helpings were so huge, even I was unable to finish mine.

(1) Hans Teichroeb, Lengua Indian farmer, who is foreman "Evaschuld" of the Lengua Indian group. (2) Gundolf Niebuhr will study at AMBS to better serve the Indians. (3) Laundry day at the Funks in Loma Plata. (4) The MMKfP in session outdoors at Johan T. Funk's place. (5) Our farewell to the Chaco in the Giesbrechts' "fence." (6) The large, new, modern church in Asunción. (7) This man with leprosy said it was OK to take his photo. (8) Model of the new Mennonite Center.



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Saturday, Nov. 16

Annual meeting of the Junta de Evangelización at the Emmanuel Church. An integrated board of missionaries, German Mennonites and Uruguayan nationals. Emmanuel pastor Hugo Morreira said much is happening in Uruguayan churches. Not expanding like Korea but. . . . Asdravol Vique said, "But we have many needs."

Discussion reflected that Uruguayan churches are mostly of poorer economic strata. Most of the Junta budget goes for workers, but 90 percent of that comes from North America. COM staff wondered what this means for a church now 30 years old.

Hard discussion. Some argued in defense of the poor. Others wondered if it's time to push for more self-support.

Then came the proposal for a new building to symbolize the Mennonite Study Center on the old seminary site. After much discussion, the architect's plans were approved. Most of those funds will also come from the United States and Canada.

They freed John Fehr for a new church planting assignment in Montevideo. He's quite excited about that. I got the feeling John might try to build a church among a more affluent class of people. He appears to have the necessary skills and dedication.

Sunday, Nov. 17

Day of the annual convention for the Spanish Mennonite churches in Uruguay—Convención de Iglesias Menonitas de Uruguay—at the Sauce Church. Waldemar Driedger is the pastor.

I had the privilege of meeting John and Bonnie Driver. He teaches at the study center and agreed to translate for me at the convention.

The church was so full, people were asked to take children on their laps and put others on the floor. The whole building soon rang to music, guitars, clapping . . . based on Zechariah: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit. . . ." Singing was dominant, instruments and clapping all in a facilitating manner.

Two sermons in the morning. Lunch and recreation. Then reports from all the churches (some were readings, some testimonies and some skits).

Excitement and optimism was strongly evident in the whole day's activities. It feels good that we are partners in ministry with these believers in Uruguay.

Monday, Nov. 18

Off to Curitiba in Brazil. En route we stopped at Porto Allegre and at São Paulo (here Erwin Rempel, COM executive secretary, joined us). São Paulo greeted us impressively. From the sky it looked like this city of 13 million was largely covered/capped with copper. I was reminded of roofs tanned in the hot sun.

Ralf and Heinz, two young sons of Gerhard Peters in Curitiba, took me upstairs so that we could visit privately in their bedroom. They wanted to know if I had ever been to Disneyland. Then they had 1,000 more questions. Both attend the Mennonite private school of about 1,000 students in grades 1-12 here in Curitiba.

Tuesday, Nov. 19

We visited the Portuguese churches in Curitiba and in Palmeira. Teodoro and Susie Penner are pastors in Palmeira. Rev. Peters is pastor of the Xaxim Church in Curitiba. Others have Portuguese pastors. There are struggles over charismatic expression in the churches.

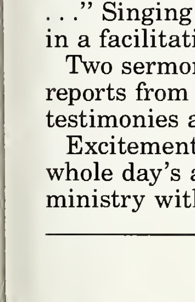
Lunch at Witmarsum with Peter Pauls Sr.—a name like a legend to me from Mennonite history—one of the pioneer settlers in Brazil. A rare privilege to visit in person.

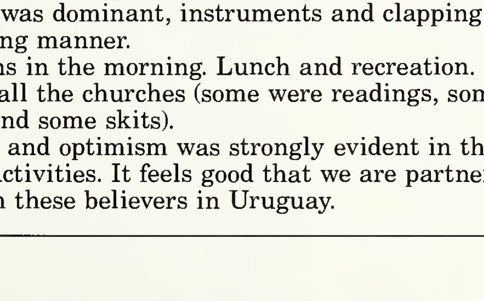
Visited a huge AMAS (Church Social Service agency) day-care center in Palmeira (well over 200 children) with a vocational school and an emerging congregation on the grounds.

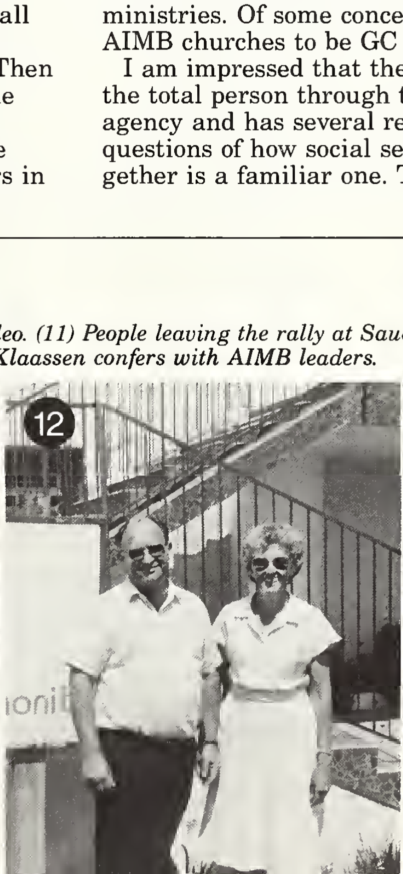
This evening there was a meeting with AIMB (the German Mennonite Conference) leaders at the Boqueron Church. It appears there is some tension between the AIMB and AEM (Portuguese Mennonite Conference). The AEM has divided work in Brazil into five regions. AIMB is directly involved mainly in Region Two. AMAS (the Brazil equivalent of our MCC) was to serve as social support agency for both conferences. This has not worked out too well because AEM has not always understood how AMAS fits in. AIMB would like to see closer correlation of these ministries. Of some concern is also what it means for AIMB churches to be GC members.

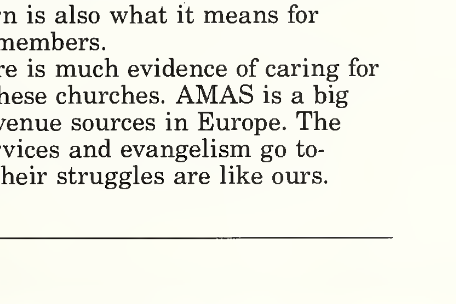
I am impressed that there is much evidence of caring for the total person through these churches. AMAS is a big agency and has several revenue sources in Europe. The questions of how social services and evangelism go together is a familiar one. Their struggles are like ours.

(9) CEMTA. (10) Junta de Evangelización meeting in Montevideo. (11) People leaving the rally at Sauce. (12) Teodor and Susie Penner at Palmeira. (13)The Sauce Church was too small. (14) Glendon Klaassen confers with AIMB leaders.









Teaching children peace

Gladdys Makes Peace *by Jan Hogan (Brethren Press, 1985),* **Mattie Loves All** *by Mildren Hess Grimley (Brethren Press, 1985)*

Reviewed by Bernie Wiebe, editor

Many people assume that the issue of peace and non-resistance is a matter for adults. Far from fact. Unless we lay solid foundations for peacemaking early in people's lives, it becomes difficult to adopt such a lifestyle as an adult.

And while there are some excellent books available to teach the way of Christ to children, beginning with the Bible and several excellent ones by Cornelia Lehn, this area needs more attention.

The Church of the Brethren has recently released two more excellent resources for children on this topic.

Gladdys Makes Peace is an early elementary level storybook telling about Gladdys Esther Muir (1895-1967)—how she grew from childhood and how she lived.

The storyline will fascinate children, and it teaches via the story, not by imposed moralisms.

Illustrations are objective enough so as not to be misunderstood. But they have an element of surrealism that is sure to evoke good questions and to stimulate fertile imaginations of youngsters.

Gladdys Muir founded the Peace Studies Institute at Manchester College, the first program of this type in the world. A story well worth knowing.

Mattie Loves All is similar, except it tells of Martha Cunningham Dolby (1876-1956), one of the first black women to be called to the ministry among the Church of the Brethren.

This book gives good historical insight to some CB traditions—clothes, customs. It also helps children see what a call to ministry means.

And while *Mattie Loves All* may be regarded by some as strictly a book about women's roles in the church, I believe it is also an appropriate book for peace teaching because it shows Mattie following Christ's call in her life. After all, peacemaking is simply faithful discipleship.

The story is fascinating and will intrigue youngsters. The illustrations are plain and demonstrate a lifestyle.

Both books are highly recommended to all who care about teaching Christ's way in the lives of children. Excellent for children's items in church and for family use.

Why suffering?

Grace Grows Best in Winter *by Margaret Clarkson (Eerdmans, 1985, 207 pages)*

Reviewed by Janice Pauls, Route 2, McPherson, KS 67460

Whenever catastrophes engulf Christians, the inevitable question is why. Why is God doing this to us?

Margaret Clarkson concedes that afflictions do come directly from God and that no evil can touch his followers unless he permits it. She suggests, however, that because God does everything out of love, the trials and suffering Christians must endure are not punishment but means by which they are strengthened. She uses biblical references from Job to illustrate that God's followers are perfected through suffering.

Clarkson points out that life needs trials just as the natural environment needs clouds. Without clouds in the universe, there would be no rain, vegetation or life. Without trials, human beings are not able to grow and mature in God's grace. "The sole reason for our existence in this body is that God may be glorified in us," says Clarkson. "If there is one thing that pain or sorrow will do for a Christian, it is to enlarge his capacity for God." She believes that we can only fully appreciate the rainbow after having experienced clouds on our horizon.

In her view, God not only permits suffering but chooses those to whom he brings tribulation. She writes, "Only if we can learn to look upon our trials as having been chosen for us by the one who has made us to be his own inheritance and who has given himself to us as our portion and inheritance in return, can we stand up to the pressures of pain and trouble with unbroken spirit and bring forth from our thorny walls the fruit which he requires of us."

Clarkson refers to suffering as God's hedges that confine his chosen ones but also, to some extent, protect them. She deals at some length with faith and how it relates to these hedges.

Evidently the author has experienced a great deal of suffering in her own life and through her experiences has formulated the philosophy related in the book. Some concrete examples might have been helpful in more clearly communicating her message to the reader, but many will find help by reading *Grace Grows Best in Winter.*

Rural issues

The Family Farm: Can It Be Saved? *by Shantilal P. Bhagat (Brethren Press, 1985, 75 pages)*

Reviewed by LaVonne Platt, Route 2, Newton, KS 67114

From a brief historical overview of U.S. agriculture to a discussion of agriculture in the future, *The Family Farm: Can It Be Saved?* sketches the changing structure of American agriculture, suggests causes for the changes and goes on to assess the current farm crisis from economic and other perspectives.

In his 75-page booklet prepared as a Church of the Brethren response to the need for study material on the current farm crisis, agricultural economist Shantilal P. Bhagat helps readers get in touch with rural issues and guides them to an analysis of the present situation and future options for American agriculture.

"Should the church be involved in the current rural crisis?" Bhagat asks and then answers affirmatively.

"Viewed from a biblical perspective, the current crisis in American agriculture is fundamentally a justice issue, a moral and political issue. The big question it raises is who will control the land. Who exercises authority over the land? God's Word on this is clear. God owns, we tend."

Included in each of the six chapters in the booklet are brief reactions from people involved in the issues being considered, questions and ideas for discussion and a list of action possibilities that make the booklet usable by church and community groups. A resource section at the end includes a list of organizations working on farm issues as well as lists of audiovisual and other materials.

One wishes the material had been expanded to book length in order to provide a more in-depth understanding of today's agricultural situation. It could then have served even more appropriately as a basis for action by readers.

MEDITATION

The tune of our priorities

She was genuinely excited when she told me how much she enjoyed her new job. She was teaching about 10 fourth graders. My friend in another church then told me she would probably resign at the end of the quarter.

"But why," I asked, "when you enjoy it so much?" The mother of one of her students had even complimented her on how much her child had enjoyed the Sunday school class.

"It really ties you down," she explained. "We like to be able to take off on weekends and we can't do that this summer if I'm teaching."

How sad, I thought, that in contributing to the Christian training of children or young people we feel we are tied down. Have we lost our sense of dedication?

A gifted musician told me that what our choirs needed were more singers willing to donate one hour a week to practice. It creates serious doubts about our dedication. When the gifted singers sitting in the sanctuary outnumber those in the choir loft, you ponder the lines, "Take my voice and let me sing,/ Always, only, for my King."

Children and young people question our sincerity or dedication when they see cars drive to the church door, unload the children and then head back home—planning to catch another 40 winks or to read the Sunday paper before making it back in time for church.

If the teenagers I'm trying to woo into attending class have parents who sleep in and give them no encouragement to come, surely those young people must get the feeling that church school can't be all that important. How can we expect to keep young people interested in Christian education if we set a poor example?

The older generation expresses horror when young people question the double standards so often practiced by their elders. Many sincere church people find time to take an active part in service clubs of various kinds and help with Blue Birds, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, social organizations and study clubs. They back school athletic teams with little hesitation. Some of these same people say no when it comes to helping promote the spiritual welfare of the church. "Take my life and let it be/ Consecrated, Lord, to Thee." Indeed?

These other organizations are not evil, but when Christians fill their schedules to the breaking point with these and then find themselves unable to serve their church, where they gain spiritual nourishment, we have reason to wonder about priorities. Are we the dedicated Christians we claim to be? How often we make a mockery of "Take my moments and my days;/ Let them flow in ceaseless praise."

We hear a report that our mission boards need more money to send new workers to the field. If our children see us fumble with our nickels and dimes when the offering plate passes us in church, we need not be too surprised when they doubt our profession of "Take my silver and my gold;/ Not a mite would I withhold."

"Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee."

Helen Friesen

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The biblical ideal for peace is much more than a world free of war. Prophetic messages in Isaiah 2 and Micah 4 speak about a demolition of weapons *and* recycling them into useful implements for tilling the soil.

Our world today needs more than resisters to war. We must sincerely follow Jesus' call to be peace "makers" (Matthew 5:9).

This issue takes us deep into the core of being ready to follow the Prince of Peace.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Let's pray for peace

Hostage takings, terrorist acts, summit "duels" and escalating global unrest are not consoling signs that "peace on earth, goodwill to all people" has truly been heard or taken sincerely.

Ours is a warring world. We are angry easily, kill readily. We plan to establish a world to our liking and with our justice.

That Christians are equally caught in such a tragic and futile dilemma is most readily visible in Central America. Millions of dollars have been provided by Christians in support of the contras in Nicaragua—for fighting the government. The Sandinista government also receives much money from Christians. Believers cannot agree on who is right in Nicaragua.

Somehow even Christians fail to learn the lessons of the Bible and of history. Early Christians were rarely to be found in armies—any armies. Tertullian (155-240) declared that Jesus disarmed all soldiers when he took Peter's sword. Origen (185-254) wrote, "No longer do we take the sword against any nation nor do we learn war anymore since we have become the sons of peace through Jesus" (*Contra Celsum*, p. 33). Origen and others said that Christians best help their political leaders by praying.

It may sound trite today to again call on Christians to pray for peace. But it is a call to a profound spirituality. Gandhi once said that violent people know how to kill; non-violent people know how to die.

The genuine prayer for peace is a prayer for vulnerability, a prayer for opening ourselves to God and to other people. It is a subduing of our human wishes and a cultivation of our spiritual needs. It is to pray, "Lord, give us not so much the things we want, but help us learn to know the people we need to love and to live with."

Such prayer seldom comes readily. It requires fasting and repeatedly going apart to be with God. It requires a thirsting for righteousness, a hunger to see all people lifted up before God, a compassion that God's love become known to the world, a willingness to die so others can live.

How can a Christian gladly shoot to kill another person created in God's image—regardless of the political or other labels such a person wears? In wartime, opposing soldiers have frequently found that they belonged to the same denomination. Yes, even today's Soviet military has numerous Baptist, Lutherans, Pentecostals and Mennonites in its ranks. Can believers, in the name of Christ, blow away fellow believers?

Pray for peace. James writes, "You ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passion" (4:3). To pray means to grapple with and to overcome human biases and prejudices. We must begin to think God's thoughts, desire what he desires, love what he loves, progressively look at things from a new viewpoint.

Can we think about that in 1986? Pray for a new "fix" in '86? Have we dared to let ourselves think differently from what seems patriotic, i.e. to think what is godly? Aren't most of our prayers preprogrammed to fit our wills and wishes? Don't we normally pray a disproportionate amount of "give" and "please make"?

How much are we able to bow down and simply pray, "Lord, I do believe, but help me with the many, many things of my unbelief? I can't believe that truth and justice will overcome the great world powers. It is almost impossible for me to believe that peacemakers are blessed and that your blessing is upon the meek. It is clear I need help."

When did we last pray with such honesty? When did we last pray in agony?

Let us pray. Pray without ceasing. Pray until we can somehow overcome the tempting alternatives.

It will cost. We'll have to agonize in loneliness. Tears may become drops of blood. But the victory of Jesus' Gethsemane prayer is worth the pain.

Mahatma Gandhi, perhaps never fully a Christian as most of us perceive Christians, said, "I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeking God face to face. The whole of my activity, whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical, is directed to that end" (Johnston, *Christian Mysticism Today*, p. 151).

To pray for peace is not only essential to our hope for peace on the globe. It is simply the right thing for all believers. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST
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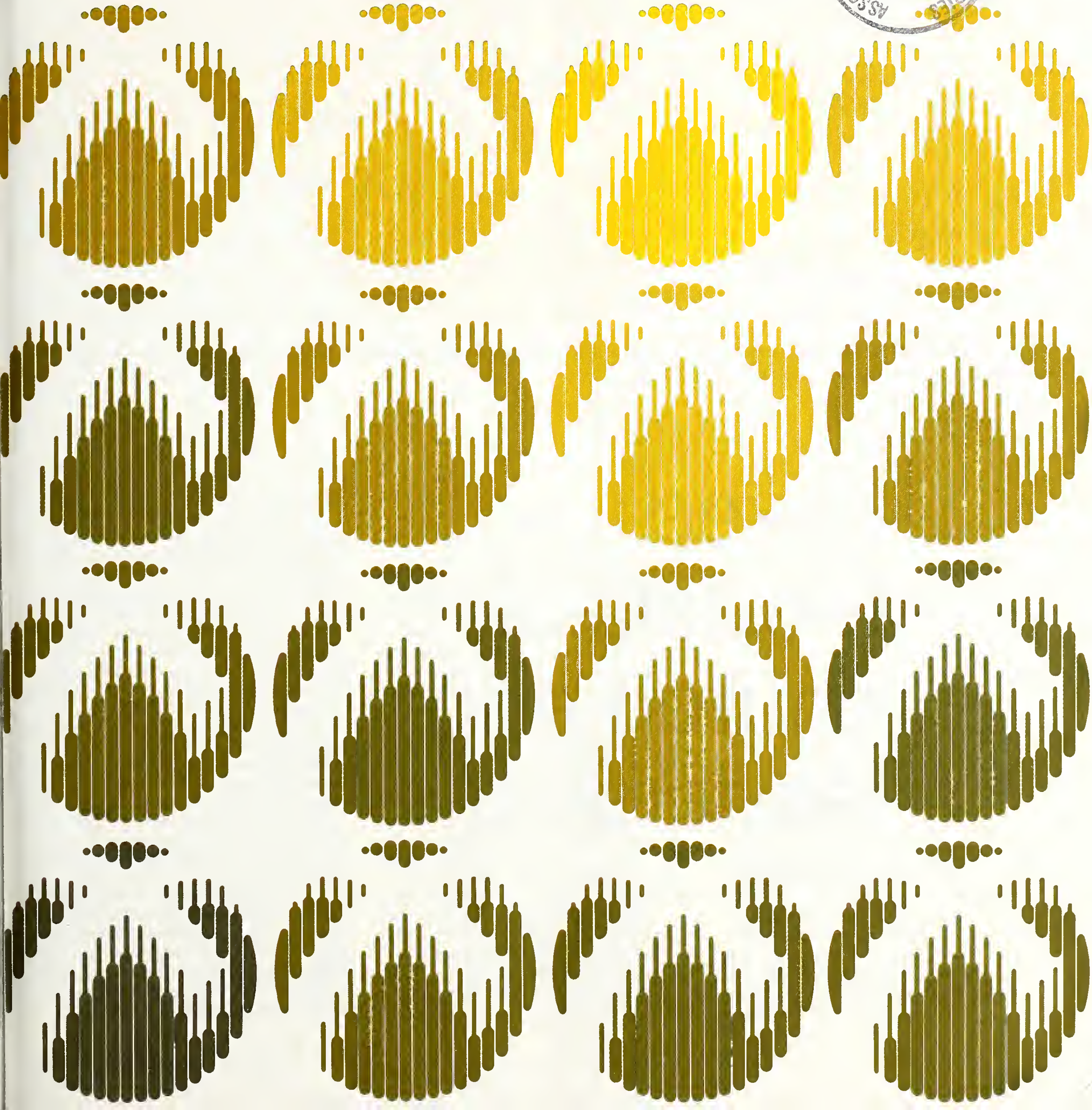

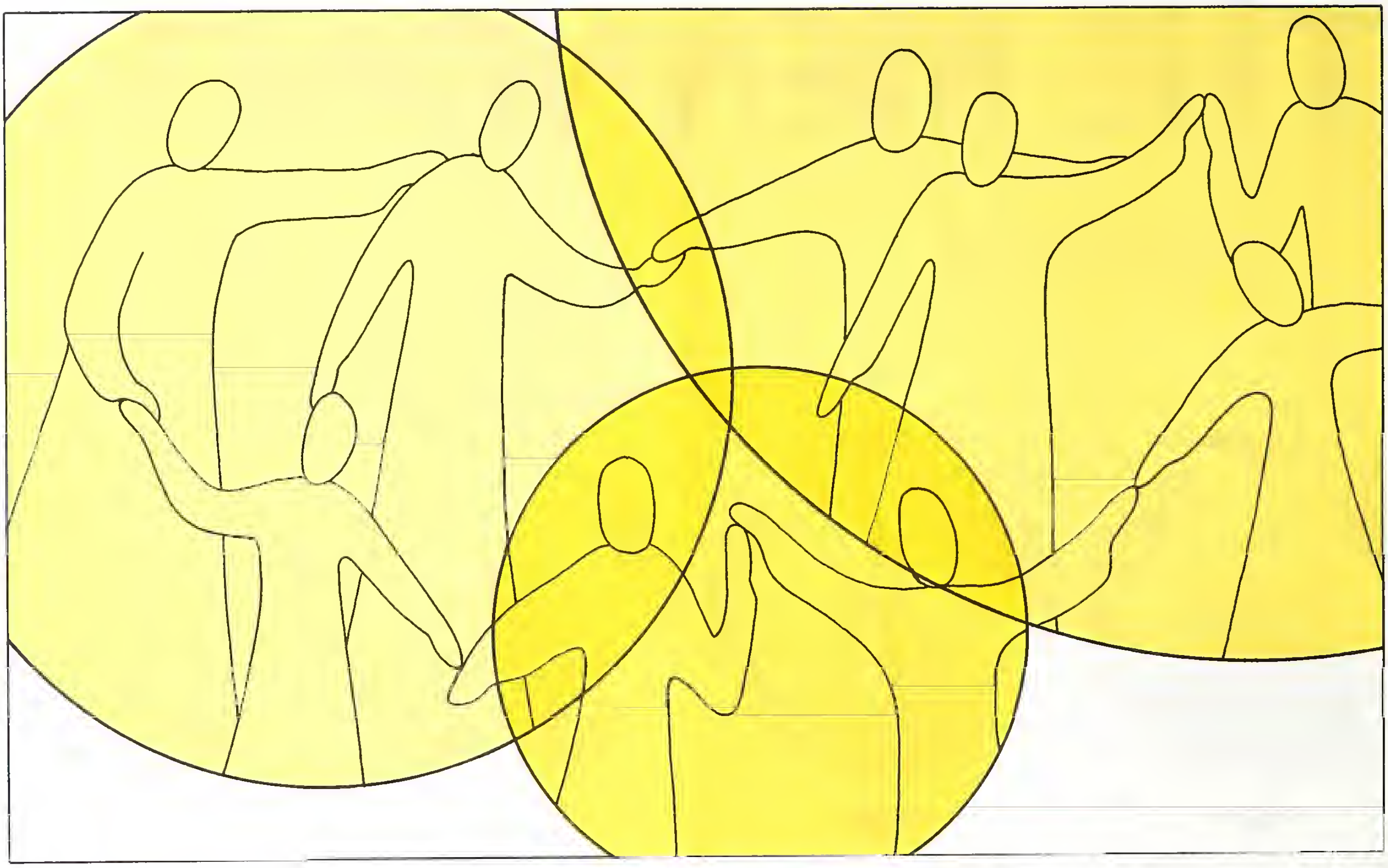

"The dynamic of the Anabaptist movement was due at least in part to a recognition and acceptance of the fact that the Holy Spirit works through each part of the body."

Mixed models of church and leadership

Bernie Loeppky

Mennonite churches in the United States and Canada are in the middle of a crisis. It is a crisis that affects pastors and congregations alike. It is a crisis of ministry in a rapidly changing world.

The New Testament model of ministry as we have understood it in the past was based on a number of things. It was based on the *discernment of gifts.* Different people had different gifts, and the ministry of the congregation grew out of the discovery and the utilization of those gifts. This meant that many different people ministered in different ways. It also meant that no one person—hired or layperson—was expected to have all the gifts.

A second factor that characterized the ministry of the early church was that of *being called.* The call to ministry came both from an inner conviction of the Holy Spirit's leading and some outward confirmation, usually a group of fellow believers or a congregation. As a result of this, ministry happened in the context of the body of believers, and ministers were seen as an integral part of that body.

A third feature in the early church was the *broad understanding of ministry*. It was not restricted to teaching or preaching. Ministry was any activity which under the Holy Spirit's direction was used to edify the saints, build up the body or extend the body of believers by reaching out to people in need of love, forgiveness and the Good News. The Reformation referred to this, among other things, as a priesthood of believers. Believers in Christ were seen as free to approach God, but they were also able to be priests one to another.

Dark Ages and ministry. Some three centuries after Pentecost, the concept of ministry was narrowed down to those who were officially designated priests and bishops. That is, ministry was seen to be a function of those who held official office in the church. The Middle Ages (or the Dark Ages) therefore had a restricted and rigid view of valid ministry.

Rediscovery of NT ministry. One of the refreshing and explosive features of the Reformation was the rediscovery of ministry in the New Testament sense. The dynamic of the Anabaptist movement was due at least in part to a recognition and acceptance of the fact that the Holy Spirit works through each part of the body. Pastors were seen as "shepherds of the flock" and "equippers of the saints." The result was a dramatic change in congregational style and ministry. Large numbers of believers, especially gifted and empowered by the Holy Spirit, became the driving force which could not be stopped.

Historically this meant for the Mennonite church that ministry was a direct concern of the whole body or congregation. Among other things, it resulted in a concept of lay ministers who functioned not as individuals but as members one of another or as members who were really an extension of the larger congregation. This model of congregational life was a radical departure from the established church.

New concepts of ministry. During the past 20-30 years, the Mennonite church has faced a dramatic shift in ministry concepts. For the most part, these concepts have been absorbed from the environment rather than integrated by way of our biblical understanding. On the one hand, we give lip service and allegiance to the Anabaptist understanding or model of ministry. That is, we believe in a broad congregational ministry. At the same time, in the process of shifting we have moved with regard to pastoral leadership into a popular Protestant model which sees the pastor as the one who ministers to the congregation as well as for the congregation in the larger community.

Pastors as general managers. The most extreme model in this regard is that of the pastor as general manager. This model expects the pastor to be the chief motivator, the chief decision maker, the coordinator of all committees and generally to take responsibility for the success or failure of the congregational program. However, as soon as a pastor lives up to this popular model he is by definition in conflict with our long established model of congregational life. The conflict is built or programmed into the current system.

The result of this programmed conflict is a narrowed and weakened ministry for congregations and pastors alike. Pastors are expected to be strong leaders who can take responsibility for everything that goes on in the life of the church. This means, among other things, that the pastor is expected to see himself as a professional person distinct from the body of believers or at the very least prepared to move on short notice and, if need be, to move frequently.

The real *crisis of ministry* can be seen in the fact that few pastors' families are producing candidates for pastoral ministry. It is further seen by the high turnover rate of pastors and the number of churches which are in need of pastors. Most significantly, the crisis is demonstrated by the many painful and destructive situations that develop when a part or all of a congregation decides that it is time for a new pastor.

Further, the difficult task of conflict resolution is not really an option simply because the conflict relates to the existence of two incompatible models. These conflicts usually result in blame attached to the pastor, to the spouse or family, or indeed to a part of the congregation. Seldom, if ever, are the real issues dealt with.

Consider the example of First Mennonite Church (not the real name). The average term for a pastor in this church was three years. The search committee looking for the ideal leader moved beyond the Mennonite church for potential leadership candidates. Eventually they found a highly qualified pastor whose understanding of pastoral leadership was that of an efficient general manager. The initial response of the congregation was wholehearted enthusiasm. Quickly, however, conflict developed. The pastor began sincerely to work in the style of an effective general manager, only to find resistance from a congregation that suddenly felt threatened. Among other things, they reminded the new pastor of the fact that "as Mennonites, we make the decisions as a group." Needless to say, the pain and the hurt spread through the entire congregation. The models simply did not mix or match.

The crisis in ministry is by no means one that is limited to the call or the termination of pastoral leadership. What is involved at this point in our history is the basic theology or understanding of what it means to be a congregation. Because we have allowed ourselves to be drawn into a model of ministry which does not fit our congregational theology, we have set ourselves up for a whole host of problems.

In some ways Mennonite churches are faced with a critical choice. On the one hand, we can adapt our theology of the church to fit whatever the popular version of pastoral leadership happens to be. On the other hand, we can ask the basic and difficult questions about congregational life and discipleship and its meaning for our time. Certainly as a first step we need to struggle for a clearer understanding of congregational theology, including the question of pastoral leadership.

It appears clearer that if we are to maintain our biblical understanding of the congregation, we will need to make some bold choices in terms of the standard Protestant pastoral model and congregational theology.

Several possibilities may well exist. There is a need, however, to discover again the dynamic relationship of the early church and the Anabaptist movement. In other words, the whole concept of ministry needs to be rediscovered by the congregation as a body of believers, and in the process models of pastoral leadership need to fit our congregational theology and not the other way around. •

We have mixed our Anabaptist model of the congregation as a decision-making body with the popular Protestant model of pastors being general managers or chief executive officers.

Ministerial leadership in the Ge

Jacob T. Friesen

For 15 years (1970-1984) Jacob T. Friesen served as director for General Conference Ministerial Leadership Services. During these years Jake participated in over 500 leadership changes. He became acquainted with nearly all GC pastors and their spouses.

Upon his retirement, Jake was asked to reflect upon ministerial services and needs in our conference.

Leadership changes. Each year 40 to 60 leadership changes are made in U.S. and Canadian GC churches. Sixty to 100 additional congregations engage in a pastor review leading to a vote or consensus to extend or terminate the pastor's term of service. Every year nearly one-third of our pastors (most with families) deal with the anxiety and the stress of a possible "non-confidence" vote.

Area conference minister. The roles of district or provincial conference ministers vary greatly. I have my own idealized image of what I see as the perfect conference minister. It is a person with pastoral experience, known and trusted by congregations and pastoral leadership of the area, skilled in interpersonal relations, trained in peacemaking (conciliation). The person has a gift for intimate sharing and burden bearing with leadership people: respected but not an authority figure, competent but not controlling, warmly evangelical and flexible.

It is a person who is free and welcome to move in and out of the local congregation. An outsider who is "in" on all that really matters. One able to counsel but refusing to take over. One ready to stand alongside the pastor to defend as well as to confront. One ready to suffer with as well as to celebrate.

Self-images of the pastor. Arnold Nickel, pastor and conference leader who died suddenly in 1972, did an extensive study on the General Conference pastor entitled *Self-Images of the Pastor*. It was designed "to let the pastor speak." He writes, "The Canadian pastor, once the unchallenged symbol of the divine presence in each Mennonite community, is experiencing a sense of crisis in his self-image. The minister is not certain who he is, what his function should be or how he should relate to other people in the helping professions" (p. 122).

"In the United States there is a vital interest among ministers to be open to God's direction, to support an active lay participation and to engage in team ministry. The tensions within ministers concerning their self-image have produced a new concept of the professional ministry. Pastors are coming to grips with their own integrity, with their own discoveries of what they ought to be doing and with their own opportunities of harbingers of change. Pastors are seeing the need to share with each other as professionals and to participate in team ministries. They are also seeking the deeper sources of faith and fellowship with lay leaders for remaking their self-images" (p. 102).

In 1984 I heard a pastor describing himself, "A pastor is no different from any other Christian and as such should neither be exalted nor ignored. The pastoral authority lies not in the office itself but in the integrity of the pastor's witness, his lifestyle, his openness to others and his continuing desire for personal Christian growth and transformation guided by God's Spirit." Another pastor states his view of the pastor's role, "I see myself as one who is a Christ-centered person, a prayerful person, a person of integrity who seeks to speak the truth of Christ openly in a spirit of love and concern, and who seeks to practice what I preach. (And when I don't, I keep on preaching in the hope that I will increasingly convert myself.) I see myself as a relational person, a good communicator, a good teacher, an accepting and affirming person."

A statement prepared in 1982 by Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Ministerial Leadership Services included the following statement under the heading *Implications for this Leadership Pattern for Leadership Today:* "It is the task of the church's servants with their various ministries to confront people with the healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to call forth a commitment to this One as the master, to nurture these and the growth and knowledge of Christ (to full maturity in Christ), to experience Christian community and to ready these for witness and service in the world."

The local congregation carries heavy responsibility in shaping the pastor's self-image. After observing how churches affect pastoral leadership, it is obvious that some churches are strongly affirming, bringing out the best in their members and their leadership. Others are critical and destructive, especially under pressure.

The aging ministry. I am now 65. Pastors 10 years younger and older than I have carried the major leadership load of the last 20-30 years. The '60s and early '70s did not attract our youth into church vocations. We now have a limited supply of experienced pastors in the 35-45 age range. Congregations have the option of asking an aging pastor to continue serving. They may also ask a much younger and less-experienced person than has been their pattern. Some may call an experienced pastor from another

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The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

eral Conference

Some churches bring out the best in their leaders; a few seem to specialize in being critical and destructive.

church background. Pastors over 65 may be qualified and willing to accept the call.

I am optimistic as I see young pastors assuming heavy responsibility. Many seminary students are in their 30s and give mature leadership even though they are in their first leadership role.

Pastors alive and well. Any pastor's personal growth and professional development needs higher priority. College and seminary education plus on-the-job study is not adequate for a lifetime career in ministry. Rapid changes plus increased sophistication and expectations of the churches demand major blocks of time for personal spiritual growth and professional development.

Much is being said about burnout, pastoral fatigue and congregational disaffection with the pastor. In many instances the pastor is simply exhausted. Sermons lack newness and relevance. Study is short-range, under pressure for next Sunday's sermon. Appointments increase. Activities accelerate. Busyness becomes more visible as the inner strength fades and the well of inspiration runs dry.

It's partly a question of time management. It has been said the management of time and energy is as essential to the pastoral ministry as preaching and teaching. Ralph Lebold states, "It is my view that many pastors move or quit because they are empty and despairing, because they have quit growing."

What is now being done. (1) Every district and province now has a staff person known as conference minister. In 1975, only two areas had such regional leadership. (2) Pastoral changes are carried out in consultation with the area conference minister. Candidates are interviewed by a ministerial committee before the church extends a call. (3) Congregational profiles are prepared by churches seeking pastors.

4. Pastoral installations, licensing and ordination are initiated by the local church in consultation with the conference minister and the area ministerial committee. (5) Job descriptions and memos of understanding are common in our churches. (6) Pastor salaries and benefits are developed along guidelines and recommendations by conference bodies.

7. Pastor/congregational review is carried out by church leadership. Recommendation is then brought to the congregation for the pastor to continue or terminate with affirmation from the congregation rather than a yes-or-no vote on a pastoral term of service. The focus is on dialogue rather than on secret ballot. (8) The average length of pastoral service in a given congregation has increased significantly. At the same time we continue to terminate pastors abruptly and sometimes in hurtful and un-Christian ways. (9) Pastors' continuing personal growth and professional development is taken seriously by district/provincial leadership.

10. The most dramatic development in the past decade has been the emerging role of women in the pastoral ministry.

11. Pastors work more intentionally in reaching out to each other for support in personal, family and professional concerns.

12. The average age of pastors entering the ministry is higher than in the past. The average age of students at the seminary is early 30s. Many are married and have families.

Future leadership needs in our churches. We need to be more intentional to affirm people for ministry. "All the ministers who will be in seminary in the year 2000 are currently alive and the church must compete more dramatically to identify people with quality gifts and graces for the turn of the century" (John Fletcher).

Future leadership will be prepared increasingly by seminaries that will become microcosms of the world scene. Faculty will be fully involved in addressing needs and challenges on the world scene. Spiritual formation will be restored as a central experience in the life and work of the seminary.

The pastor's role and self-image will need more attention. Jim Glassy insisted 10 years ago, "We tend to recruit ministers through one kind of image, train them in the light of another kind and then require them to practice in terms of yet another kind."

Increasingly, women and second-career people, many also women, will rise to prominence, not because of quotas but because of competence.

Enlisting and training of ethnic pastoral leadership will have to take higher priority.

Ranier Maria Rilke wrote, "The future enters into us in order to transform itself in us long before it happens." This is taking place in and among us today.

Canadian and U.S. pastoral leaders need each other, both for inspiration and correction.

Leaders from non-Mennonite backgrounds add a significant and necessary dimension to our denomination if chosen with care and good judgment. It is assumed that they be convinced or highly sympathetic to our Anabaptist view of the church and our teaching on biblical non-resistance.

Information explosion. John Naisbitt in *Megatrends* sees "information explosion as one of 10 megatrends. . . . The real importance of the Russian Sputnik in 1957 was not space age but introducing the era of global satellite communications. . . . Today the space shuttle has a lot more to do with globalized information economy than it will ever have to do in our lifetime with space exploration. . . . The new source of power is not money in the hands of few but information in the hands of many." And, "We are drowning in information but starved for knowledge. . . . The shift is from supply to selection."

Pastors are suppliers of information—the Good News. They have the difficult and exciting role of "selection." As church leaders we may assess the megatrends and preach and teach the information of Good News so that it is heard and not drowned in the information ocean. •

Polishing the wisdom

Marion Keeney Preheim

If you attend General Conference triienniums, you must have heard Henry A. Fast speak. Typically he goes to the mike after many others have done so. What he says often pulls together their remarks and adds new insights. Participants often applaud and pass a well-worded motion.

Fast showed his speaking ability early in life. He recited a piece in church when he was only five. However, he was timid as a child and young man, especially when people called Mennonites "hayseeds."

Somehow Fast developed a remarkable ability to be present when something momentous was happening in the Mennonite world. He was a new Christian and Bethel College student when Mennonites began dealing with the World War I draft.

"We got really excited as young students," Fast says. "We spent many bull sessions talking about how silly it was in our enlightened age to think we could solve things by destroying cities."

Drafted in May 1918, Fast was not allowed by the army to finish his last week as high school principal and math teacher in Whitewater, Kan.

Fast went by train to Junction City, Kan., for induction into the army. He and the other conscientious objectors discussed soberly the question of when each would take a stand. "I decided I would declare myself the first time I could," Fast said.

He did so, was given non-combatant status and assigned to a base hospital for seriously ill men. He began at the Fort Riley hospital, which soon had flu victims. Fast caught the flu from them.

The war ended Nov. 11, 1918, but Fast was sent to a St. Louis hospital for patients with stomach and face injuries. His discharge came on June 17, 1919.

Following training at Garrett and Witmarsum seminaries, he was asked to teach at Witmarsum in Bluffton, Ohio. There he met Ethel Schindler, a Bluffton College senior. They married in 1923.

That year Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., called him—at age 29—to serve as pastor. As he made innovative suggestions, some questioned the newer emphases he had found in seminary training.

Fast pursued his interest in New Testament studies. He earned a Ph.D. at Hartford Biblical Seminary. His dissertation was published in 1959: *Jesus and Human Conflict.*

After his graduation one church considered him but did not call him. "My pilgrimage was not a smooth road," says Fast.

Instead he became the GC field secretary. He visited churches in North America, Brazil and Paraguay from 1936 to 1939. Out of the visit to Paraguay came the conference's decision to start mission work there.

He took part in another momentous peace effort due to the World War II conflict. Mennonite Central Committee asked him to go to Washington in 1940, along with Quaker and Brethren representatives, to help negotiate better provisions for COs. Civilian Public Service resulted, with Fast as director until 1943.

At the 1941 conference Fast was elected to the Emergency Relief Board (later the Board of Christian Service).

Aware of Fast's ability to organize, the 1941 session also elected him to chair a committee to redo the conference structure. He served through two major changes—in 1950 and 1960.

A job change came in 1943 to chair the Bible and Christian education division of Bethel College. In class he primarily lectured, but he also guided students in their studies. He challenged many to do voluntary service and to learn how the church deals with social and ethical issues.

Besides his teaching, Fast handled alumni relations, foreign students' concerns, supply preachers for area Mennonites and college chapels.

The college gave Fast a citation in 1967 for his work with the chapel services, especially mentioning his prayers.

The college encouraged the faculty to serve in the wider church. Fast served as MCC vice chairman from 1943 to 1960 and helped launch PAX, an overseas program for COs. MCC commissioned him for visits to South America, Europe, Mexico and Russia.

Fast served as director of European MCC services in Basel, Switzerland, from 1951 to 1953. Bethel released him to do this work.

Because of some Mennonites' World War II experiences in mental hospitals, Fast thought MCC should set up some kind of organization to use the new ways they found for working with the mentally ill. His proposal resulted in MCC setting up Mennonite Mental Health Services and later opening a mental hospital. Fast served as MMHS board chairman from 1950 to 1966.

He also chaired the GC Board of Christian Service for 18 years. After leaving his job at Bethel, he worked as executive secretary for the board from 1961 to 1964, starting there at age 67.

Following that position, he directed MCC Voluntary Service for one year. He then pastored the Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

During this time he was member-at-large on the GC Commission on Home Ministries, consultant and resource person on aging, member on the Inter-Mennonite Cooperative Council on Hospitals and Homes and member of CHM's peace and social concerns reference council.

One of Fast's main traits now is his sharp thinking. He keeps active with many things at home and at church. He works closely with the conference on peace work, such as that with nonregistrants and the draft. All this in his 92nd year.

Might we call Henry A. Fast a church patriarch? Yes. But more simply, we could say he is polishing the wisdom he has acquired in a lifetime.

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Anguish is part of the symphony of grace

Monty Ledford

All Scripture is "God-breathed," and we need all of it. The Bible is like a symphony orchestra in which each instrument must be heard if the full symphony of God's grace and mercy is to be heard.

Some books are like the piano and violin; there is little danger we will neglect them or their music. But other books are like the oboe or piccolo that we hear seldom but which provide an indispensable richness to the symphony of grace.

To judge by the TV and Christian best-sellers, too much American piety falls into the circus calliope category or into the class of what a friend aptly calls the "Jesus is my girlfriend" song. I think we need more than ever the powerful and moving poetry of Lamentations to acclimatize our ears to the divine music that is played in the minor key.

A few weeks ago our congregation viewed "And When They Shall Ask," the wonderful film about the Russian Mennonites. I began to weep at the visible sorrow, anger and pain of the eyewitnesses. I value their honesty, and it touched a chord in my heart so that I thought, as most viewers probably do, "What if *my* boy saw me and his mother shot dead? Who would take care of my children?" Perhaps the Russian Mennonites among us are the best qualified to understand Lamentations, for the five poems which make up this book were also born out of an apparent security that collapsed into crushing defeat, bitter suffering and hopelessness.

I guess we all know the story—more or less. The Jewish people divided into two often hostile nations after Solomon. Both nations descended into idolatry and debauchery, with Israel sliding a little faster than Judah. Assyria wiped out Israel in 722 B.C., and Judah limped along, weak, impoverished, but fondly telling themselves that "this is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord," and no enemy can destroy it (Jeremiah 7:4).

A spectacular reform under Josiah reinforced the sense of security, but the nation was too far gone for God to hold back. In 586 B.C. the city and temple were destroyed, and the most important survivors were deported to Babylon, while the rest were left to starve in Palestine. The kings of the earth did not believe, nor did any of the world's people, that enemies and foes could enter the gates of Jerusalem. But it happened.

Lamentations is the stunned, then angry, then exhausted reaction to this event.

There are also some would-be Josiahs among American Christians who tell us revival is in the offing if we only execute more murderers, get prayer back into schools and outlaw pornography, while we continue to support oppressive governments, kill 1.5 million babies per year and build up our machines of destruction. "This is the land of the free, the land of the free, the land of the free."

Lamentations is unlike most Bible books in that its chapters were originally part of the text. Each is a poem based on the Hebrew alphabet of 22 letters. Chapters 1-4 begin each stanza with a successive letter of the alphabet (see notes in the NIV translation). Chapter 5 has 22 stanzas without the initial alphabetical sequence.

Why does the poet structure his poems this way? I think there are two answers. One recalls the woman who suffered a terrible experience and carried it stoically until she was admitted, years later, to a hospital where she cried for days at a time. To a nurse, who tried to comfort her, she replied, "I'm paying for this time here and I'll cry if I want to." Terrible grief can be allowed to flow without totally destroying if the setting is right. Perhaps the strict alphabetical structure of these poems structures the raging grief enough to keep it from overwhelming the poet. Also, the use of all the letters of the alphabet may be showing that the whole range of human anguish is made to pass by in review.

I want to give you an assignment before my next article. Read Lamentations in one sitting. Then, read it again and find as many parallels as you can with Deuteronomy 28. *First in a series*

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My testimony after college

Trudy Voth

Over half a year ago I graduated from Canadian Mennonite Bible College with a B.Th. degree. Meanwhile I have gotten married, set up house in Winnipeg and joined the full-time employment ranks at CMBC as a secretary and bookstore manager. These months have brought much newness, excitement and fulfillment into my life, but also many challenges. One of these challenges is to identify the impact of my CMBC experience in my life.

It is said that life often makes more sense in retrospect than when we are in the midst of the adventure. Six months after my graduation from CMBC I was still wondering about the purpose of my theological education, but an answer recently presented itself. On Monday, Nov. 18, 1985, my husband, Don, and I became members of Douglas Mennonite Church. The procedure for this required a testimony from all candidates. For the first time since my teenage baptism I had to specify publicly what I believe.

After a three-year theological program that opened up many perspectives on God, religion and Christianity, I had a far more difficult time stating my beliefs than when I was 15 and "believed everything in the Bible." At the same time, what I say now is a more deeply rooted conviction than the one I expressed earlier. That CMBC would strengthen my faith was something I couldn't see during my studies.

Throughout my CMBC years I struggled to find "absolutes" in a world that appeared to have none. In my Douglas Church testimony I was finally able to pinpoint a number of points on which I base my faith. These points are absolute in the sense that I not only believe them to be true for me, but I consider them the heart of the gospel to be proclaimed to all of humankind.

First of all, I believe the Bible to be the most perfect and complete literature expressing God to people. Not the *Koran* or the *Bhagavad Gita* but the *Holy Bible* is my ultimate authority on matters of faith and spirituality. I do not falsify other religious scriptures, but I hold to the Bible as the most perfect expression of God to us.

Secondly, I believe in a personal God manifested as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In this trinitarian form, God is actively interested in and involved with humankind. As Father he is creator and sustainer. As Son he is savior and Lord. As Holy Spirit he is guide and comforter.

Thirdly, I believe in the church as the kingdom of God on earth, a foretaste of what believers will experience in heaven. I believe in the necessity of many parts to this kingdom; each believer has an important function in the church.

With these three statements of faith I clarify my purpose in life. It is to live according to God's will as expressed in the Bible. This means to live in relation with God through forgiveness of sin and through prayer, to be a disciple of Christ in thought and deed, and to be filled with the Holy Spirit for the supernatural power required for Christlike living. My purpose in life is to "live in a manner worthy of the calling to which I was called." I am to draw people's attention to God by becoming like Christ and helping to create the kingdom of God on earth.

The interesting thing about this testimony is that I am stating virtually the same beliefs I had before I came to CMBC. A B.Th. degree was not necessary to come to this conclusion. However, the studies toward my degree made me probe and test my original thesis, with the result that the thesis stands firm. The impact of my theological education rests not in my statement of faith but in the assurance of that statement.

My B.Th. degree is for me a symbol of an educational experience of searching, confusion and doubting overcome by a return to a basic statement of faith. The intellectual insights of my learning clarified by understanding of the Bible, but the purpose of my degree appears not to be the spread of biblical, theological data. Too many academic facts I have already forgotten. Its purpose is to point me to the God beyond academia and help me point others to the same.

Six months after my graduation from CMBC, as wife, homemaker and career woman, my B.Th. degree serves to strengthen my original faith in God, with the conviction that he can be reached in no other way but by faith. God is to be believed and experienced. This is the message of the Bible. On this I take my stand.

Trudy Voth, 11-1055 Grant Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3M 2A3, is the bookstore manager and works as an overload secretary at Canadian Mennonite Bible College.

"My B.Th. degree is for me a symbol of an educational experience of searching, confusion and doubting, overcome by a return to a basic statement of faith."

A Mennonite bicentennial

Beverly Suderman

How do Russian Mennonites play the Mennonite Game with Swiss Mennonites? "Good . . . but that's not a Mennonite name, is it?" "Your maiden name is Shantz—like Shanzenfeld, you say?" "Good . . . oh, like Merle Good from the States?" That's how the game is played when two segments of the Mennonite ethnic spectrum are introduced to one another.

Reg and Kathy (Shantz) Good are two Mennonite Central Committee Canada volunteers who travel the length and breadth of Canada in celebration and anticipation of the 1986 Mennonite Bicentennial. Under the direction of the Mennonite Bicentennial Commission and MCC Canada, they have been piloting their Menno-Van to small rural communities and urban centers, to northern Manitoba, eastern Nova Scotia—and points between—and west to Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. On the road since September 1984, they will end their tour in June, with the Bicentennial Sunday celebrations in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., on July 6.

Their program features a 20-minute audiovisual telling the story of the Mennonites from Reformation beginnings to current involvements. Another major component of their visits is the over 1,500 books on Mennonite history that they present to libraries and schools.

For many western Canadians, the Mennonite bicentennial has been a mystery. The Canadian story of most Mennonites west of Ontario originates in the migrations of the 1940s, the 1920s or the 1870s. Many western Mennonites still remember their centennial festivities of 1974. A bicentennial celebration so soon after their 100th? The origins of these 200-year-old Mennonites are fuzzy. When Reg asked the high school students of a Manitoba Mennonite educational institute from where the first Mennonites to Canada had come, the self-assured reply was "Russia, of course." Then, "Germany?" And finally, tentatively, "Holland?" Upon hearing that it was the United States, the students were abashed. That the history of the Mennonites in Canada began before 1874 was for many of those students, as it is for many western Mennonites, a surprising fact. It is this type of education that Reg and Kathy identify as an integral part of their assignment. "We acquainted the Russian Mennonites with the larger Mennonite world," Kathy remarked, "but in the process we're also acquainting ourselves with Mennonites of other cultures."

Both Reg and Kathy are of Swiss Mennonite background—"ethnic Mennonites." Many of their presentations are for those who can also be considered ethnically Mennonite. But at a program in Montreal, where Mennonites of French, Hispanic and Anglo-Saxon extraction met, where the dialogue of the audiovisual was translated into French with Spanish asides, they were told by those present that to be Mennonite meant neither borscht nor shoofly pie but faith. For those people, quiche or tortillas were as Mennonite as watermelon and rollkuchen; for them, the importance of being Mennonite lay not in dress codes, languages or culinary habits but in a living and vital faith, a faith distinct and separate from that of others.

The idea that all of us have important stories to tell and retell is significant to the concept of the Mennonite bicentennial. The stories vary from group to group: the Swiss, the Russian, the French-Canadian, Hispanic, Chinese and Native Mennonites all have their stories. And if for the Russian Mennonites part of the story is expressed in playing the Mennonite Game, that too has validity. But Reg and Kathy also place an emphasis on acknowledging the broader story. The stories of the Canadian and U.S. Mennonites have some significant differences which need to be acknowledged and accepted. Part of their goal, say Reg and Kathy, is to cultivate a "healthy nationalism." U.S. Mennonites may not be a direct part of the Mennonite bicentennial, but the lesson of varied but equally important stories is just as significant for them as for the Canadian Russian Mennonites.

As might be expected, Reg and Kathy have many stories of their own to tell when it comes to life in the MennoVan and life on the road. There was the time when a woman dressed in her housecoat ran out of her home just as they were pulling out of a parking lot. She had heard about the Mennonites and didn't want them to escape before she had a chance to talk to them. Then there was the mother and her high school daughter who chased the MennoVan halfway across town and finally knocked on their door at a stop light. "Boy, am I glad to catch up with you," and the woman explained that her daughter was doing a project on the Mennonites for school and she wanted some information. And there are those who deduce that the motor home, with its large green and white signs proclaiming it the "MennoVan," is some type of display on wheels and peer in through the tinted windows only to discover Reg and Kathy having their morning coffee.

Kathy (Shantz) and Reg Good travel across Canada in the MennoVan to promote the bicentennial of Mennonites in Canada. Culmination of their work will take place July 6 at Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., in special Mennonite Bicentennial celebrations.

The Goods have been pleased with the project to date. They believe that by July the Mennonites of western Canada will know that "Good" is indeed a Mennonite name, and they will have learned yet another side to the Mennonite Game.

Beverly Suderman works as an assistant to the archivist in the Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. She wrote this report exclusively for The Mennonite.

The Lutheran Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and four affiliated congregations have filed suit in Phoenix, Ariz., against the U.S. government. The suit seeks to challenge the limits of government in infiltrating worship services and other kinds of meetings. The infiltrations are said to have taken place while government agencies were probing for information related to church involvement in the sanctuary movement.

"One can make a case for repressed and unhealthy sexuality being a major force in American culture," writes Steve Reschly, pastor at Cedar Community Mennonite Church, in *The Cedar Chest* (January), the church's newsletter. "Some speak of 'missile envy' as one factor in the arms race—our missiles are bigger than their missiles. . . . Sex and violence belong together in American life, in movies, books and crime patterns. One might question whether such obsession even qualifies as genuine sexuality, the final irony. Adam and Eve were both naked and not ashamed. We are naked, ashamed and very aggressive."

NEWS

Receipts exceed budget by $6 million

MCC Canada had $2 million in bank that failed

Vancouver—A 1985 budget oversubscribed by almost $6 million and establishment of two major new Canadian programs highlighted the Mennonite Central Committee Canada annual board meetings here Jan. 16-18.

Because the MCC Canada fiscal year runs Nov. 1 to Oct. 31, the 1985 receipts included the special attention to Ethiopia, much of which happened in the last months of 1984. This was credited for the constituency giving to MCC $2 million more than what had been budgeted. Half of this was to the Foodgrains Bank, which earned extra matching government funds. Thus the $15.5 million budget ended up in actual receipts of $21.5 million.

Since 1985 saw the collapse of Canada's Northlands Bank, many people were eager to hear how it affected MCC Canada. The board reported having over $2 million on deposit in the bank when it folded. But the Canadian government has assured investors that they will be reimbursed.

A survey about mental health needs, done by a special committee, led to the establishment of Mennonite Mental Health Services Canada, counterpart to the MMHS program several decades old being operated by MCC. This year MCC Canada still sends $33,000 to Akron in support of the larger MMHS. Hopes are that by 1987 MMHS Canada (not necessarily its final name) will have its own staff and program.

Another major new program approved to begin as soon as possible was titled "Christian Service Education." Long-range plans call for an MCCC staff coordinator who will relate to Mennonite colleges for engagement of staff to give major time in training students for "service" work such as MCC does.

Rod Sawatzky, interim president of Conrad Grebel College, said they might be ready to act on this proposal as early as this fall.

The Mennonite press took a little heat at this meeting. *Mennonite Reporter* was referred to as misinterpreting the Ottawa office report to the War Crimes Commission. *Mennonite Brethren Herald* was cited as being unfair in comments about the process of the new MCC building plans.

Chinese Church members serve food.

A new $1.35 million building in Winnipeg is to be ready by this summer. It will be owned 50-50 by MCC Manitoba and MCC Canada. The *MB Herald* had raised questions about its being built in the suburbs instead of in the urban core area.

Other board actions at Vancouver included (1) Since the world refugee count continues as high as ever (10 million), the MCCC staff was urged to promote more sponsorships in Mennonite churches. (2) Since provincial MCCs are taking more initiative in work with disabled people, the MCC Canada handicap awareness staff and program were terminated. (3) A 1986 budget of $16.5 million was adopted.

Ray Brubacher, Elmira, Ont., was elected as the new vice chairman of MCCC. *Bernie Wiebe*

Moderators/secretaries agree on major consultation

Vancouver—Following two special inter-Mennonite consultations—Leamington in January 1985 on a "common strategy for church planting" and Winnipeg in September 1985 on peace, evangelism and church planting—Canadian Mennonite and Brethren in Christ moderators and secretaries called for a "planning consultation" about future direction in these discussions.

This planning meeting was held in Vancouver Jan. 16, prior to the annual MCC Canada meetings. Agreement was reached to hold a major consultation in connection with the 1987 MCC Canada meetings. On the agenda will be four themes: (1) "Authority and Interpretation of the Bible," (2) "Conversion and Salvation," (3) "The Church and Mission," (4) "Unity." *Bernie Wiebe*

In Touch is the name of the new eight-page quarterly describing the work of the General Conference Mennonite Church to its constituency. Edited by Muriel Thiessen Stackley, the first issue was mailed in late November 1985 to 33,000 homes, most of which do not receive *The Mennonite*, *Der Bote* or *Mennonite Reporter*. *In Touch* seeks to strengthen the identity of the General Conference, inviting readers to become involved in its ministry. It reports the work of the conference's commissions and seminary. The second issue is to be mailed in late February.

An MCC Canada shipment of 400 metric tonnes of flour left Vancouver early in November 1985 bound for Vietnam. The flour was designated for Binh Tri Thien province, where cold weather at the time of blossoming reduced the 1984-85 rice crop by an estimated 70 percent. Louise Buhler, MCC's representative to Vietnam, was surprised at the difficult food situation in the area during a visit in May 1985 and recommended that MCC provide food aid.

Mennonites in East Germany met at a Pentecostal church in East Berlin in October 1985 for a first-ever nationwide "Gemeindetag" or "church day" celebration. Fifty-five people came from all parts of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) for weekend sessions focusing on "Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg—And What Next?"

Presbyterian-Mennonite Shalom Conference: We are not alone

Mt. Pleasant, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—Can a church that baptizes babies and has supported almost every war in its history become a peace church by the year 2000? Can a church that is becoming urbanized and wealthy continue to be faithful to its peace tradition?

The former dream for the Presbyterian Church was uttered by Bruce Rigdon, Presbyterian speaker at the Presbyterian-Mennonite Shalom Conference at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center here Jan. 10-12. The latter concern was implied by J. Lawrence Burkholder, Mennonite speaker at the same conference.

Planned by a joint committee and attended by Presbyterians and Mennonites in roughly equal numbers, the conference, with 200 participants, generated no sharp debates or barbed questions. The atmosphere was more like a family reunion. It seemed that each side was encouraged by the presence and conviction of the other. And the nuclear threat brooded over all.

In his keynote address, "The New Testament Basis for Peacemaking," Ulrich Mauser of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary demonstrated from Luke and Matthew that the New Testament message is one of peace. The real Messiah is diametrically opposed to a kingdom that rules by force.

History followed Bible study. J. Lawrence Burkholder of Goshen (Ind.) College reviewed Anabaptist-Mennonite approaches to peacemaking and Bruce Rigdon of McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago spoke of Calvinist-Presbyterian approaches.

J. Lawrence Burkholder, Mennonite educator, left, and V. Bruce Rigdon, Presbyterian theologian, were key speakers at the Presbyterian-Mennonite Shalom Conference.

Burkholder reported what is familiar to Mennonites—that it was an Anabaptist conviction that Christians should not use the sword and that the church should be free. The church should define its own life without interference from the state. Only the regenerate should belong to the church. "Their demands seemed utterly unrealistic, idealistic. What do you do when the Turks are at the door?"

Burkholder told of Anabaptist persecution. He noted that the story of Dirk Willems, who saved his pursuer and thus lost his life, has been impressed on Mennonite consciousness. Mennonites during most of their history have been a minority people asking the minority's questions, such as, "What shall *we* do?" In contrast, majority churches ask "What is good for the *nation*?"

Rigdon's presentation emphasized theology more than ethics. What can you say about peace when you are not a peace church? He observed that John Calvin admired the high standards of the Anabaptist communities but was afraid of their emphasis on free will as opposed to his concern for the sovereignty of God.

He outlined five characteristics of the Calvinist tradition: (1) listening to the Word of God, (2) experiencing the Word made visible in the sacraments, (3) confession writing, (4) disciplined living in conformity to the confession and (5) clergy and laity ruling the church together.

Rigdon brought another contribution to the conference. He has repeatedly visited Christians in the Soviet Union. He reported on the vigor of the church in the Soviet Union and how Soviet Christians spend hours and hours in corporate worship. He said that in 1988 the Russian Orthodox Church will celebrate its 1,000th anniversary and observed that there are as many as 100 million baptized Christians in the Soviet Union compared to 18.75 million members of the Communist Party.

In the Soviet Union, he said, no one would join the church casually, for there is no social advantage for doing so. Americans sometimes ask about Christian witnessing in the Soviet Union. "The very act of going to church is an act of public witness. To dare to live the Christian life is a powerful witness."

The conference also featured eight seminars and the drama "Alice in Blunderland," put on by Legacy, a drama group from eastern Ohio. The message of the drama was that the world is in danger but it is not too late to do something about it.

On Sunday morning the conference ended with a sermon by David Shenk of Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions in Salunga, Pa., followed by a communion service.

Peter Dutton, a Presbyterian teenager, was impressed by the Mennonite anti-war position. He implied that he had never seriously considered this option before.

Elroy Kauffman, a Mennonite from Harrisonburg, Va., was encouraged by the news about Christians in the Soviet Union. He saw it as an appropriate antidote to the jingoism we are sometimes fed in the name of conservative Christianity. *Daniel Hertzler*

Our Mennonite Legacy is the new title of a slide presentation produced by Jan Gleysteen. Formerly called "Faith of Our Fathers," the set tells the story of the Anabaptists and their descendants, the Mennonites, over the centuries. The presentation has been seen by thousands over the past 16 years.

A Christian children's home in Chad, whose resources have been stretched to the limit by Africa's drought crisis, is the beneficiary of $4,285 (U.S.) from 1984's Mennonite World Conference offering in Strasbourg, France. European Mennonite workers have long been a part of the staff of the children's home at Abeche, run by the Sudan United Mission for homeless and orphaned youngsters from infancy to about age 12. In addition, relief and peace funds have gone to European Mennonite Peace Committee and the International Mennonite Peace Committee.

Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalyn, met recently with North American Mennonites working in Nepal with United Mission to Nepal. The Carters visited Nepal for several weeks during a vacation. The meeting resulted from separate requests by UMN officials and Mennonite Board of Missions workers Mark and Darlene Keller and Russel and Marjorie Liechty. Mark Keller wrote, "The Carters impressed us as being very warm and open. They spoke of contacts with Mennonites in North America. They were very interested in the work of UMN and the church situation in Nepal."

Sixty-five young adults attend Break '85

Mt. Pleasant, Pa. (MBM)—Super, marvelous, topnotch, challenging, thought-provoking and encouraging are just some of the words participants used to describe Break '85. Sixty-five young adults gathered at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center here Dec. 27-30, 1985, for a retreat sponsored by Student and Young Adult Services of the Mennonite Church and the Commission on Education of the General Conference.

Reasons for attending varied. One young woman said it was "because of the topic and my desire to fellowship with other Christian youth." Others felt the need to be with people who also experience a tension between spirituality and social action and wanted the opportunity to struggle together with fellow Christians.

Of the 65 participants, 34 were from Canada. Forty-four were college or university students. Participants came from 54 Mennonite Church congregations, five General Conference congregations and six dual-conference congregations.

The theme of the post-Christmas event, God = Peace^2, focused on the integration of outer peace in the world with inner peace of the heart. Patty Shelly, an assistant professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., led the worship times. Ivan Emke, a graduate student at Carlton University in Ottawa, was emcee/host.

Ivan Emke, Break '85 emcee/host, leads participants in an activity.

The featured speaker was LeRoy Friesen, director of peace studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. In speaking about inner peace, Friesen noted that those who live in two of the most technologically advanced countries (the United States and Canada) are in many respects empty people. "There is a hole inside us. A hole that doesn't get filled by all the opportunities we have," he said.

"Advertising and the media try to convince us that their company's product will fill that hole. But the good news is that the biblical story tells us that the hole is God-shaped," Friesen proclaimed, adding that "we won't be fulfilled until we experience the one for whom we hunger." He also spoke about the threat of death we experience as we live under the cloud of the bomb, challenging participants to look for good news in the situation of life as it is now.

Opportunity was given for small group discussion and feedback on Friesen's input on Saturday and after other sessions throughout the weekend. Other activities during the weekend included worship, recreation, informal discussions and fellowship, and a talent show.

The closing session Monday morning became a time for commitment to new steps of faith and a sharing of reflections on the weekend. Friesen reminded participants that God is the first peacemaker. Wherever the "gates of hell" are—in Washington, Ottawa or Moscow—they will not prevent the kingdom of God from blossoming in all of its fullness, and we are all invited to be a part of what God is doing. He also challenged everyone to look for joy in all of life, even in suffering, and not only in brief, isolated times of celebration.

In response to questions concerning the weekend together, one participant said that the small size of the group made it "feel a bit like a family." As people thought and dialogued together about timely, important questions and issues, bonds were formed and support was found. Though participants represented a diversity of backgrounds and views, many discovered in a new and exciting way what it means to struggle together on issues of faith and life.

Based on the positive response to Break '85, planners have tentatively scheduled Break '86 for Dec. 27-30, 1986, at Laurelville. *Sharon Speigle*

Pastor needed

Pastor needed for **Superb Mennonite Church**. Membership 55.

For more information send inquiries to:
Rudy Wiebe
Box 623
Kerrobert, SK S0L 1R0.

Research interns needed

Three positions assisting FCNL's lobbyists with legislative work. These are 11-month paid assignments beginning **Sept. 1, 1986**. Duties include research, writing, monitoring issues, attending hearings and coalition meetings, maintaining clipping and issue files. Applications close **March 15**.

For information write or call:
Friends Committee on National Legislation
245 Second St. NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 547-6000.

About a year ago, Mennonite Central Committee established a task force to study how MCC should respond to employees' requests that MCC not withhold federal taxes from their paychecks. This was to enable them to keep that portion of their taxes used for military purposes. After meeting with leaders from eight conferences, the task force reported in December 1985 that none of the conference groups was in favor of honoring the employees' requests. Even though the General Conference honors such requests by its employees, the executive committee of its General Board did not favor MCC taking similar action.

Peter and Sue Martens Kehler of Abbotsford, B.C., are leading a General Conference Asia Missions Tour April 17-May 6. Participants will visit Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and China to become acquainted with missions and missionaries. The Kehlers are former missionaries in Taiwan. Interested people may contact them at Box 867, Sumas, WA 98285, (604) 859-6014.

As reported in the *New Republic*, in a recent BBC interview, President Reagan remarked, "I'm no linguist, but I have been told that in the Russian language there isn't even a word for freedom." (The Russian word for freedom is *svobada.*)

Mennonite Service Venture launched

Elkhart, Ind., and Newton, Kan. (MBM/GCMC)—A new program offering short-term service projects for youth and young adults has been created by Mennonite Board of Missions (Mennonite Church) and the Commission on Education (General Conference Mennonite Church).

Mennonite Service Venture is a two-pronged program. Group Venture, which provides service projects for youth and young adult groups, is administered by Jane Miller, coordinator of Short-Term Programs in the Voluntary Service department of MBM. Youth Venture refers to the ongoing work camp program administered by Paula Diller Lehman from COE. MC and GC volunteers can participate in either venture.

Mennonite Service Venture has a threefold purpose: (1) to offer service and learning experience for youth and young adults; (2) to foster greater interest among youth in church-related service; and (3) to provide volunteer help for existing service programs and projects.

In Group Venture, Miller explained, youth or young adult groups participate in a service and learning project that lasts from a weekend to two weeks. Groups are especially needed during June, July and August.

The group pays for transportation and food as part of Group Venture. The sponsoring group provides housing, work schedules and coordination.

Youth Venture, according to Lehman, is a one- to three-week experience for individuals ages 14-18 from mid-June through August. A variety of projects are possible, from working with children or physically handicapped adults to construction and building cleanup.

Participants pay $50-100 for lodging, meals and insurance.

Miller and Lehman are interested in identifying additional project locations and on-site coordinators. Brochures, posters and a list of project locations are also available. Contact Miller at MBM, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370, (219) 294-7523, or Lehman at COE, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100. *Phil Richard*

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Needed

Camp director and **counselors** for Rosthern Youth Farm Bible Camp. Camp dates—June 20-Aug. 22.

Apply **before Feb. 17** to:
James and Lois Nickel
Camp coordinators
1027-425 115 St. E
Saskatoon, SK S7N 2E5
or
Rosthern Youth Farm Bible Camp
Box 370
Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0.

Principal needed

The executive committee of **Freeman Academy**, an inter-Mennonite junior-senior high school in Freeman, S.D., is seeking applicants for the position of principal. This position, including responsibilities as chief executive officer, opens **July 1**.

For further details contact:
LaVerne Graber
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Route 2
Box 187
Freeman, SD 57029
(605) 925-7782.

Mediation Services of Winnipeg by Sept. 30, 1985, had experienced a 50 percent increase in the number of criminal court diversion referrals received over the same period in 1984, from 194 to 291. Mediation Services has a staff equivalent of five people and 30-35 trained volunteers. The program is funded almost entirely by Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba and its constituent churches.

Amadeu and Ivonetpe Coimbra

"I feel tremendous happiness to see God completing his work here through Amadeu Coimbra," said Gary Loewen, Commission on Overseas Mission worker in Brazil, at the close of the Nov. 24, 1985, ordination service for Amadeu. When Loewen first met him in 1981, Amadeu had not been inside a church for seven years and felt negatively about the church. His wife, Ivonetpe, was involved in a ladies Bible study, which provided a door of friendship. Later Amadeu made a Christian commitment, then became an eager student under Loewen.

Missionaries face African border conflict

Elkhart, Ind. (AIMM)—A border dispute between the West African nations of Mali and Burkina Faso interrupted Christmas gatherings of missionaries in the region. Workers with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission had gathered at the Dennis and Jeanne Rempel home in Orodara, a Burkina Faso town 35 miles from the Mali border.

On Dec. 26, 1985, reports were received in Orodara that armored vehicles from Mali had crossed the border and reached Koloko along the Orodara road meeting with limited resistance from the inadequately equipped Burkina forces in the area. A mass exodus of people from Orodara ensued as many tried to reach the interior city of Bobo Djoulasso. Others fled into the bush of the countryside.

The AIMM team met to pray and decided to remain in the area since several people from the local church asked to stay with the missionaries. The church includes Mali citizens residing in Orodara as well as local Burkina citizens.

Missionary Dennis Rempel wrote, "As night fell the missionary team came to sleep in our yard along with our church brethren and some neighbors. We shared finger foods, rice and sauce. Prior to darkness several signs were put up on the gates and walls to identify our house to invaders as well as Burkina soldiers, and we waited.

"Around 7:30 p.m. we received further news that a group of Burkina commandos had ambushed the Malian troops and sent the Malians fleeing back to Mali."

Missionaries and their families slept on mattresses out of doors as a precaution against a possible bombing attack. At 11:30 p.m. a pounding on the gate aroused the group. A neighbor and a police officer advised evacuation since the large number of casualties inflicted on the Mali troops was expected to provoke a counterattack. They walked four miles to a friend's field.

Finally, at 3 a.m. the Malian president signed a third cease-fire, after the first two had not held. The truce is being maintained by a peacekeeping force of the Organization of African Unity.

Missionaries returned to Orodara the next day. But with the military still in high profile, they decided to repack and spend two more nights out of town on a parcel of land used for agricultural development. The Rempels returned safely to their residence in Orodara on Dec. 31, and the rest of the mission team returned to their respective villages without further incident.

The border dispute reportedly was prompted by a pre-Christmas census conducted by the Burkina Faso government. When census takers entered villages along the northern border in disputed territory, the Mali government reacted with military action. The resulting clashes including limited air raids spread southward along the border. An air raid over Sikasso in Mali was said to have prompted the Mali armored troop movement into Burkina Faso along the Sikasso to Bobo road, which passes through Orodara.

Help needed

Swift Current Bible Institute is now receiving applications for the following positions:
principal, beginning in June,
administrative assistant, beginning in May,
teachers, beginning in September.

Please send all applications and inquiries to:
SCBI
Attention: Personnel Committee
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

Educational opportunities in India are wide open

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—"Unlimited" is the adjective used by Kenneth G. Bauman regarding opportunities for education in India. Upon return from a five-month visit to the subcontinent, he reports that "education is in great demand. All of the mission-related schools are bulging at the walls. And the Christian community is considered the best dispenser of education in India today."

Three high schools, one middle school and seven primary schools are part of the result of mission work begun by General Conference Mennonites in 1900. Janzen Memorial High School in Jagdeeshpur is the oldest, operating now at full capacity with 575 students. Almost all of the staff are Christian. Because of the supportive Christian community, Bible classes can be taught at JMHS. "We can be thankful," states Bauman, "for this leadership training base." Most of the current pastors and church leaders are graduates of JMHS.

In comparison, Jyoti High School in Korba (population 100,000) has had to stop teaching Bible because of negative pressure from the community—non-Christian students complained about it at home. Principal N. R. Sona, however, has a course called "moral instruction" and gives spiritual leadership to the student body of 650.

Many mission-connected schools are English-medium schools. Jyoti High School is an exception, as in the Hindi Primary School (also in Korba) with 428 students. Away from this burgeoning urban center—in Champa, Surguja and Kharradard—are smaller schools.

"We have trained leaders in India now," concludes Bauman. "The fruit of the mission work is apparent."

Mennonite high school and college aged youth will discuss how to become active peacemakers at the eighth annual Peace it Together conference sponsored by Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, March 7-9. Arnold Snyder, former director of Witness for Peace in Nicaragua, now director of the Peace and Conflict Institute at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., will be the main resource person. The weekend will also include workshops and the feature film *Missing*. For more information contact Peace it Together, CMBC, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781.

A workshop on "Congregations Helping Job Seekers" has been scheduled for March 17-18 at Camp Menno Haven near Tiskilwa, Ill. Topics will include emotional responses to loss of farm or job, suggestions for supportive activities by congregations and ways to establish job search programs. Fred Litwiller, careers counselor at Goshen (Ind.) College, will be the principal resource person. For more information contact MCC U.S., Box M, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.

The MCC Ontario Handicapped Ministries Program is proclaiming the message "We are a disabled church." Handicapped Ministries will place a strong emphasis on facilitating and developing grass-root involvement in the local church. The program is asking for 25 people to become a reference group that will provide a base for provincial resource activity.

RECORD

MINISTERS

Helen Wells Quintela, St. Paul (Minn.) Fellowship, will be licensed Feb. 16 by the Northern District (GC) at Faith Church, Minneapolis.

Andrew Shelly began serving as interim pastor at Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kan., Jan. 1.

WORKERS

Doug Dyck, First Church, Burns Lake, B.C., is serving as a General Conference mission partner in Ethiopia from January to June. Working for Missionary Aviation Fellowship, he transports personnel and supplies for relief agencies, including Mennonite Central Committee.

John Longhurst, River East Mennonite Brethren Church, Winnipeg, began a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term Sept. 1, 1985, on the Peace Center staff in Dallas, Texas. He received bachelor degrees in history and religious studies from the University of Winnipeg. His parents are Clara and Edward Longhurst of St. Catharines, Ont.

Kirsten Samuelson, Trinity Church of the Brethren, Redford, Mich., began a one-year MVS term on Jan. 13 as a senior visitation worker for Friendly Visitors Service in St. Catharines, Ont. Her parents are Corine and Philip Samuelson.

Willard Swartley, professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., will spend February through May teaching and preaching among Mennonites in Pennsylvania. This is a service-teaching leave from the seminaries.

1986 Transcultural Seminar

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Eastern Mennonite College, Goshen College

MCC BC executive director

Applications are invited for the position of executive director for MCC BC.
- —Position opens early 1986, appointment time flexible
- —Salary commensurate with MCC policy

Qualifications:
- —a scriptural understanding that combines a word-and-deed expression;
- —proven administrative experience, with a service record desirable;
- —apt communication skills.

Apply by Feb. 28 to:
Personnel Committee, MCC BC
Box 2038
Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8
(604) 859-4141.

Part-time pastor needed

Philippi Mennonite Church, a small ministry-oriented fellowship in rural West Virginia, seeks a part-time pastor, effective immediately.

Duties include sharing spiritual leadership, representing the church to the community, and counseling.

Qualifications: seminary training preferred; biblical studies background acceptable. Housing and a **small** stipend provided; supplemental income will be necessary.

For further information contact:
Lois Harder
Work: (304) 457-1700, ext. 240
Home: (304) 457-2506

Elvin Kreider
Work: (304) 457-2800
Home: (304) 457-2987.

Administrator wanted

The board of directors of **Herbert Nursing Home Inc.**, owned and operated by the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan, are seeking an administrator for this 54-bed, level 111 facility. Duties to commence tentatively **April 1**.

Applicant must be mature Christian whose faith would be in harmony with those of the owning body.

Experience in long-term care would be an asset, preferably with some training in the field. The applicant should have an understanding of accounting principles and the budgetary process. Ability to communicate in both English and German is desirable. Starting salary is negotiable.

Deadline for applications is **Feb. 20**. Direct inquiries to (306) 784-2661. Applications with full resume should be submitted to:
Albert Jahnke, chairman
Herbert Nursing Home
Box 520
Herbert, SK S0H 2A0.

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John M. Drescher, Abraham and Dorothy Schmitt, and Sara Wenger Shenk offer encouragement and practical suggestions to parents.

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"Here is a book that I am eager to recommend for its honest acknowledgment of uncertainty and pain along with the joys of mothering. I strongly recommend this book for parents who want to be responsible and joyful, but not overwhelmed by rules for proper parenting."—Dr. Ruth Detweiler Lesher, psychologist

"This is a book of far more than personal experience. It is a carefully thought out theology of family and home . . . . I appreciated her stress on relationships, her sound exegetical work, and her affirmation and insistence that everything flows from a basic love relationship with God."—*Festival Quarterly*
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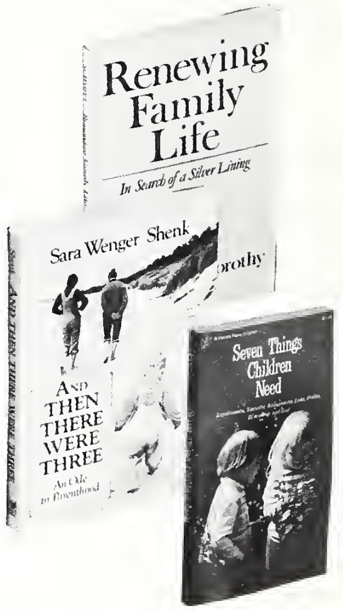
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Letter from MCC workers in El Salvador

Dear North American Sisters and Brothers,

On May 9, 1985, Mennonite Central Committee workers Susan Classen, Blake Ortman and a Salvadoran Catholic lay worker were picked up by the El Salvadoran Armed Forces and held captive for two days. Susan Classen, a health worker, was accused of teaching Marxist doctrine to the poor. Among the questions her interrogators asked were, "What was Lenin's first name? What is the difference between socialism, Marxism, Leninism and communism? Why do you teach the people about working together and building community in your Bible classes? Why don't you confine your work to government-controlled towns instead of going out to villages where there is more conflict?"

The MCC program in question works through Salvadoran churches to address basic health needs. Through it we organize parents to monitor the weight of their malnourished children, teach interested peasants how to prevent common diseases and help tuberculosis patients receive treatment. MCC, along with various Salvadoran churches, works independently of both sides of the conflict. Why are we being labeled "communist" for working with the ones suffering most—the poor?

God's only Son was born into poverty. Christ began his ministry by proclaiming, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19 NIV). Threatened and denounced by the authorities, Jesus told those who followed him, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke 6:20 NIV). Christ was scorned, convicted and crucified as a criminal, "subversive" because his life and work threatened those who cared more for power than for people.

Luis Miguel Lopez, a poor farmer, wonders whether he should move his family of five to a town controlled by the government's army or stay on his small piece of land in an area of the country where the guerrillas move freely. If he stays on his land, the military may suspect him of being sympathetic to the guerrillas; his land may be bombed or invaded. His family will have little or no access to health care, since schools and clinics in the countryside have been closed.

If the family moves to a town controlled by the army, they may not find a place to live in an already overcrowded area; there are likely to be shortages of water and cooking fuel, and the family will have to depend on handouts for food and other relief. Luis has never lived in a city and has little hope of finding work. If he and his family enter a government-controlled refugee camp, they risk losing what little dignity and autonomy their home and land provide.

The work Luis has shared with an MCC health worker has helped him decide what to do. "I feel some kind of hope for my community," he says, "now that we have begun to learn about how to care for some of our health problems ourselves." Still, he has been stopped three times by government soldiers. Because he was carrying his health material, he has been detained and accused of being a communist. He later said, "One thing we know: when they persecute us, we can be sure we are following Christ because he tells us, 'Happy are those who are persecuted in the cause of right, for theirs is the kingdom of God.' "

In spite of government claims that the situation has improved, many churches we work with continue to be persecuted by the Salvadoran authorities. Within the past year a Lutheran pastor has been killed. A Baptist minister was arrested and exiled as a criminal. The Catholic archbishop and two other Protestant pastors are also living and working in the face of death threats. A high-level army colonel called another Protestant pastor and his co-workers, including MCC workers, communists.

We as well as other churches have been advised by the U.S. Embassy that we will have no security problems if we cooperate with the Salvadoran military authorities. However, we have stated that as Christians we will help people based on their need, reject all forms of violence and work independently of either side in the conflict. Unfortunately, to remain independent is dangerous. Foreign relief workers are picked up, labeled communist and exiled. Salvadorans are picked up, labeled communist, tortured and often killed. How should we respond to a situation where those who try to work with the poor are labeled communists?

Despite the difficulties, we are encouraged by the hope of many Salvadoran Christians. They understand the meaning of Romans 5:3-4, ". . . but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope."

We experience their life-giving hope by participating in their sufferings. God asks all of us to work together with him in the building of his kingdom. Two of the most practical and powerful things we can do are pray and witness. We ask you to pray for the Christians here, that they may have courage to work on behalf of the poor even in the face of being labeled communist and risking persecution. We ask you to witness by writing or calling your government representatives about what is taking place here in El Salvador. Thank you. *Blake Ortman, Maureen McKenzie, Susan Classen, Nathan Barge, Elaine Zook Barge, Ron Flickinger, Marnetta Shetler*

CMBC ... is for Young Adults

Why would people leave the security of their homes and jobs to study at CMBC? Three of our students share why they came to CMBC.

We felt that it was important to open ourselves to new challenges in our lifestyle and beliefs. CMBC is a setting where we can become better equipped in serving others in the community and in the church. We were attracted to CMBC by the high standard of education and by the quality of the professors. Residence life has also shown us the dynamics of community living and helped us to make close friendships. We are looking forward to a year of learning and growing.

Byron and Kim Thiessen, first year students

During my university years I was challenged by my contact with non-Christians and Christians from other denominations. I realized that there were many questions about life and Christianity that I had no answers for. CMBC is not giving me easy answers to my questions but they are encouraging me to think seriously about my faith and what it means to be a true disciple of Christ. Some may consider my two years of study at CMBC as a waste of time and lost income, but the "learning for life" that is happening here will be infinitely valuable.

Marion Klippenstein, graduating student

CMBC has one, two and three bedroom apartments. Each suite has a complete kitchen and modest furnishings.
For those with children there is an outdoor play area and an inside rumpus room.

If you would like more information concerning CMBC, drop us a note.

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LETTERS

What should we ponder?

We appreciate the good work of *The Mennonite.* I would like to also encourage you to maintain a truly biblical orientation.

The article "The Word Became Flesh" (Dec. 24, 1985, issue) by Philip Friesen raised questions in my mind. There are statements that in themselves are true, such as the statement "Humankind is of this earth . . . ," which we also learn from Genesis 2:7.

In the opening statement, the author begins, "The evolutionary hypothesis, whether true or not, is a good idea for the Christian to ponder." I want to always be open to the truth. The incarnation is, I believe, the event that has gone down in history second to none in importance for all people. Friesen is correct in referring to evolution as a hypothesis rather than a theory. At this time observed facts do not seem to substantiate biological evolution from the amino acids to the human species. So as to what to ponder, Paul gives us a very positive guide in Philippians 4:8.

I do not want to be unfair or unkind to the author and maybe I do not fully understand his objective. *Arnold Claassen, 603 S.E. 2nd St., Newton, KS 67114*

Jan. 8

What about the Magi?

Since the Bible is inspired by God, we have a tendency to believe there could not be any discrepancies, no mistakes. God inspired the writers of the Bible in a special way. Nevertheless he chose human beings to write the Bible, and human beings are bound to make mistakes. That is no reflection on God.

I think that instead of using time and energy to try to deny the discrepancies, we should try to work through these. Take the Christmas story. According to Luke, there seems to be no room for the story of the Magi.

According to Matthew, Joseph and Mary lived in a house at Bethlehem and would have gone back there when they returned from Egypt but went to Nazareth because they feared for their son's life. I would like to think that the story of the wise men is historical, but according to Luke, who said that he had investigated everything thoroughly before writing, it seems hardly possible.

But even if it is not historical, it is a beautiful story with a great truth imbedded in it. The rich and the wise must also bow at the feet of the Savior, and sometimes it takes a long trip through spiritual deserts to reach that stage. *Marie J. Janzen, 217 Muse #104, Newton, KS 67114*

Jan. 10

Legacy continues in Florida

Our Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage has been used in many ways to remind us of a rich legacy. I grew up in Bluffton, Ohio, next door to the president of Witmarsum Seminary, forerunner of Mennonite Biblical Seminary. At Bluffton College I was editor of the campus paper called *The Witmarsum.* In 1970 I joined the faculty of Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo.

At Sunnyside Village, a Christian retirement community in Sarasota, Fla., I have seen the definitive use of our place and name symbols in naming streets: Witmarsum Boulevard, Grebel Place, Grebel Lane, Menno Simons Parkway, Sattler Lane.

I assume this trend is due to the impressive rediscovery of our special history, which has been led by C. Henry Smith, Harold Bender, Christian Neff and Cornelius Krahn. *Donovan E. Smucker, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6*

Jan. 15

The mid-Kansas relief sale

I read with much interest the Nov. 26, 1985, editorial "Gratitude in Action."

My wife and I have been involved in the Kansas sale for many years. We have missed only one sale since it started in 1969.

On Jan. 2 we had 235 people attend a planning meeting for the April 11-12 Kansas sale. One person referred to that editorial. It was impressive, inspiring and a challenge to new members attending a meeting for the first time. *Dale S. Galle, Box 28, Moundridge, KS 67107*

Jan. 20

**Member congregations of the
General Conference Mennonite Church**

Re: proposed amendment to constitution to be ratified at the Saskatoon conference July 21-27, 1986

In the Oct. 28-29, 1983, meeting of the General Board, it was moved, seconded and carried that an amendment to Article III, Section III, point A concerning nominations and elections be submitted to the 1986 triennial sessions for ratification. This amendment would allow the nominating committee at its discretion to bring only one nominee for president, vice president or secretary of the General Conference in the event that there is an incumbent eligible for re-election.

The nominating committee for the 1983 triennial sessions had a difficult time finding people who would allow their names to be put on the ballot to run against an incumbent who had served well. The proposed amendment, hence, was initiated by the 1983 nominating committee.

The constitution stipulates that written notice of proposed amendments to the constitution be submitted to member congregations at least one month prior to the conference sessions. This is that written notice.

The exact text of the amendment is the italicized portion of Article III, Section III, point A below.

> A. Nominations and Elections. Elections shall be held at each regular conference session to provide conference officers and members of conference boards, commissions and other agencies. Two nominees for each office to be filled shall be presented by the nominating committee, with further nominations permitted by the delegate body according to procedures to be set forth in the bylaws. *At the discretion of the nominating committee, only one nomination for an officer of the conference need be made where that nominee is the incumbent.* Elections shall be by ballot and shall be determined by majority of all votes cast.

Vern Preheim, general secretary

Editor's journal jottings—3

From Oct. 24-Dec. 2, 1985, I visited Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, Colombia and Panama. This included a 2½-week preaching assignment in Paraguay. In this issue of The Mennonite *I share the last in a series of notes recorded in my daily diary during those days.* Bernie Wiebe

Wednesday, Nov. 20
Pastor João Fernando de Andrade of the Moema Church took us on a tour of the Mennonite churches in São Paulo, Brazil. Andrade is the only full-time pastor among the Portuguese churches. Moema had three baptisms in 1985 and grew by 25 percent through friendship evangelism. It is making plans to send out its own missionary.

The Vila Guarani Church has had severe internal problems. Pastor Hans Dieter Hamm is trying to rebuild confidence.

Primavera Church experienced a major scandal in recent years. Membership fell from 40 to 14.

Lapa Church is in the midst of turmoil over charismatic expression.

Other than Moema, the church story looks sad in São Paulo. We need to muster prayers in the whole conference and to assist in leadership training.

Thursday, Nov. 21
From a depressing day in São Paulo to an upbeat visit in Campinas. Gary and Ellie Loewen, Commission on Overseas Mission workers, have recently located here to head up the CEMTE program—to train people for leadership. Over 60 students enrolled in the first year. This was most encouraging.

Today I had my first meal at a "churrascaría." We sampled about 12 kinds of meat, salads and vegetables. All delicious.

Downtown I saw the first obvious Christmas displays. The creative Christmas cards are fascinating.

Friday, Nov. 22
Over to Goîania, where there are two churches. COM missionaries Ron and Marlene Daku serve here but are currently back home in Canada.

The Guanabara Church has just had its pastor resign. One reason is difficulty with the charismatic emphasis. They hold a service with us and ask many questions. They are eager for the Dakus to return.

At Vila Itatiaia Church we see a new sanctuary together with an attached school. They are optimistic about the church's future—located in a fairly prosperous suburb. But they too express leadership concerns and are anxious for the Dakus to return.

The Dakus will have their hands full when they come back. We must pray regularly for the work here.

Monday, Nov. 25
I separated from the COM staff and flew to Bogotá, Colombia. Hector and Mary Valencia met me.

In Colombia the dark shadow of the Armero volcano disaster (Nov. 13) still dominates the media and all conversation. About 25,000 people died. Many friends of our missionaries and of people from our Mennonite churches have suffered deaths and other losses.

I stay with longtime friends—Gerald and Mary Hope Stucky.

Tuesday, Nov. 26
Got my first look at the Mennonite Center. It is quite impressive—bookstore, offices, meeting place for the Teusaquillo Mennonite Church, guest room, pastor's suite.

Peter Stucky, executive secretary for the Colombia Mennonite Churches, took me along to deliver some relief supplies to Armero survivors. They spoke freely of the tragedy and how they barely escaped.

We also visited the Mennonite churches in Bogotá. Tone and spirit were enthusiastic. They are growing. But here too are leadership needs. Pastors come mostly from non-Mennonite backgrounds. Peter is glad to report four Men-

(1) Pastor Andrade behind the Moema pulpit. (2) Pastor Hans Dieter Hamm and his wife, Eva, serve the Vila Guaraní Church. (3) The start of a baptismal "tank" in Campinas. (4) In a meeting with people of the Guanabara Church in Goîania. The pastor is the man who is holding a child on his lap.

Personal comments about Armero tragedy:

"Where the Presbyterian school used to stand, all I could now see was a huge rock. The 600 students and staff of 60 were all killed." *José Chuquín, member of Teusaquillo Mennonite Church and director of World Vision in Bogotá*

"The mud dragged me for two blocks. Then I grabbed a log, and a boy helped me to get out. For 18 years I'd been working as a county guard. In this moment I find myself alone and without anything." *Luis Angel Moreno, age 55, an Armero survivor*

"We heard a terrible noise. . . . We were sleeping, and my mother called me to get out. In this moment a car arrived and we got on. The avalanche dragged the car and began to crush it. We were pushed around . . . and it was broken against the trees. Getting out, a man made signs to us with a flashlight indicating we should come to the top of the building where he was. The next day a helicopter from the armed forces came and rescued us. Thanks to God. . . ." *Jaime Sánchez, age 20, who survived together with his mother*

nonites currently studying at the Presbyterian seminary. I got to visit with two of them. One expressed special excitement about a recent seminar on Anabaptist theology.

Wednesday, Nov. 27
I spent much of the day with Ricardo Piñeros C., a member of the Berna Church, and José Chuquín, a member of the Teusaquillo Church. Both work for World Vision.

They assisted me with firsthand testimonies by people caught in the Armero volcano tragedy. I also got many photographs taken on site by their staff. We discussed a Christian response to such people who are not believers. Both men are deeply concerned for a ministry to the total person.

This evening I attended a special Thanksgiving service at the Union Church of Bogotá. Howard Habegger, former COM executive secretary, is the pastor and preached the sermon. Howard told me he feels like a renewed man in this position.

Saturday, Nov. 30
I am in Panama City now, trying to get to Nicaragua. My travel agent had arranged for my visa to be in Managua.

COPA airline officials contacted Managua and could not locate my visa. Without it they said I could not even board the plane. They called again—after my strong insistence—to no avail.

I tried to call MCC offices in Managua. Also no luck. Finally I sent a telex.

It is Saturday afternoon and I sit in the airport, wondering what to do next. No embassy offices will be open over the weekend. I don't really have time to extend my trip. Work at my office will already be piled sky high.

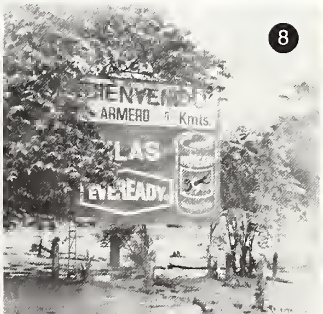
Upon checking flight schedules, I find that I can arrange to fly home to Winnipeg. It seems the best idea, even though it will take about two days.

Monday, Dec. 2
I arrive in Winnipeg about 2:30 a.m. From the heat of Panama to the frigid clime of Winnipeg is a drastic shock.

My mind, soul and emotions are mixed. Glad to be home. Sorry I had to pass up Central America.

Now to begin sorting out the meanings of the past 5½ weeks. It will take time.

(5) Pastoral couple of the Vila Itataiaia Church in Goîania find themselves too busy. He is also a physics teacher. (6) New Vila Itataiaia Church (left) has an overcrowded school attached to the sanctuary. (7) This boy survived the Armero, Colombia, tragedy. (8) The main approach to Armero after Nov. 13 was a sea of mud. (9) The pain and fear remain indelibly impressed upon the Armero survivors.



Non-member members in the church

LaVerna Klippenstein

"If Lawrence [my husband] died today," I told someone once, "I'd go back to my own denomination tomorrow."

The statement was made during a particularly stressful time of struggle within our GC congregation.

It was an awful thing to say. Unkind and untrue. It certainly says more about my own needs and biases than those in our conference.

It does, however, indicate something of the difficulties of those who have moved their membership even within the Mennonite family. I may well have idealized—some may say "idolized"—the church I left. But I know I felt secure in its clearly stated evangelical stance and conservative theological position.

I missed in my adopted conference the expository messages punctuated with quoted Bible verses, the catharsis of annual deeper-life meetings and accountability to the congregation for one's lifestyle. I missed the repeated clear call to repentance and wondered how my children would come to faith without it.

Most of all I was troubled by critical comments made by church leaders about people and programs that had blessed and nurtured my family.

Only much later did I realize that my attitude to my adopted conference was just as critical.

In the West we have the luxury of many denominations, and within each a wide spectrum of policies and practices, if not professions of faith. It is relatively easy for most of us to find a compatible church within driving distance and to transfer membership from one to another. Why then do so many adults who attend church regularly refuse to formalize membership?

There is the increasingly common situation of a Catholic marrying a non-Catholic. My brother did this when both were uncommitted to Christ. Now they worship at the Salvation Army, where baptism and membership are not an issue.

There is Sandy, an active Christian for 15 years, whose uncommitted husband attends with her. She has decided not to join until he is ready too.

The Fasts are older people who retired in a city but retain membership in the rural church where they have spent most of their lives. They have cemetery plots there and want to be buried "back home."

Do we really belong together?

For 10 years the Rempels have regularly attended a church other than their own because they like the vigorous Sunday school discussions. But they would not consider transferring their membership because of a strong sense of loyalty to the denomination where they were baptized.

Several families have told me they changed churches for their children. But they keep their old membership.

For some the issue is the mode of baptism.

Since the 1950s society places less value on church membership, and that is another factor in its decline.

Twice I have experienced another reason—the reluctance of the home congregation to "let me go." It happened first when I was married. "Wait a while before you transfer," my minister advised. "Maybe your husband will join our church."

That was long ago and far away. Today we find ourselves in another situation. Three days after finding a place to live during our two-year service assignment we found a place to worship. We accept its doctrinal position and appreciate its worship services. We can readily support its major programs and have found friends and fellowship among its members. We have been invited to become associate members and have no strong objections to the idea.

Why then do we hesitate? Primarily because our time here is temporary. Secondly, we are using this time of freedom from congregational and committee responsibilities to visit a variety of congregations. We worship at our new church regularly on Sunday mornings but have attended evening services at nine or 10 other churches. We would not feel free to do that if we were members here. Our sabbatical gives us an opportunity to observe other groups and learn from Christians of other traditions.

Added to that is the awareness that over the long term we would likely choose to affiliate with a different church. Few here would understand our peace position, and we can't support the barn dance fund-raising projects of the missions committee. We're the only teetotalers in the congregation and feel the need for adult Sunday school or Bible study, which are not provided here.

When it came to identifying these reasons openly, they suddenly sounded holier-than-thou, exclusivist to say the least. All spring from similar soil, which kept me rooted psychologically to the church of my childhood.

I think of many Soviet believers—Baptist, Pentecostals, various Mennonite groups—who have had to work and worship together for two generations. I think of our siblings and their spouses. One is a member in Bill Gothard's congregation, another is a Catholic. Others are Baptists, Pentecostals and leaders in three differing Mennonite conferences.

I think of the women in my Winnipeg neighborhood Bible study last year. They came from Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Mennonite, United and no church at all. I remember the significant and spiritually enriching times of fellowship and prayer.

In the future I must look less within and more to God when I make membership decisions. In the meantime I will continue to take seriously my responsibility for Christian nurture in the home and trust God to fill the gaps I find in the church we attend. I can't have 20/20 vision with a plank jutting from each eye.

LaVerna Klippenstein, Keston College, Heathfield Road, Keston, Kent, UK BR2 6BA, is on a two-year sabbatical/ service assignment with her husband.

MEDITATION

Which way at Saskatoon '86?

Fifty or 60 years ago it was easy to say who we were and where we were going. We were Dutch, Swiss or German. We had a common cultural background. We spoke German, Plattdeutsch or Pennsylvania German. We ate borscht, wiener-schnitzel, vereniki, zwieback and sauerkraut. In this year's GC triennial sessions, July 21-27 at Saskatoon, we will want to ask the question, "Where are we going?"

In the story of Alice in Wonderland, Alice is perplexed as she comes to a fork in the road. The Cheshire Cat, perched on the limb of a tree, observes her dilemma. Alice asks, "Which way shall I go?" The cat answers, "Where are you going?" Alice returns, "I don't know." "Then either way will get your there."

God has a place for the General Conference in the story of the church. There is a multitude of good things we are doing in church planting, missions, evangelism and education. But we have limited resources and abilities. We need to set priorities. Missions holds the church together. We have fewer overseas missionaries than 20 years ago. This may only indicate that we have been good at training native workers. However, the commission to reach others is still the same. It must remain our highest priority.

What is our next order of business—nurture, evangelism, peace. . . ? Jesus said to some people one time, "What do ye more than others?" (Matthew 5:47). Maybe in some areas we have done more than others—in peace ministries and proportionately in missions. But in all these areas are we willing to be even more innovative? Are we willing to take risks? Our faith needs to be alive and growing and creatively applied to the work of the church of Christ.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit we have accomplished much in the past decades. But like the fire department that has just put out a four-alarm fire, we cannot rest on past accomplishments. We must be ready for the next challenge. And there are more challenges ahead.

At a recent meeting of the American Bible Society, George Gallup said a survey revealed that 41 percent of today's teenagers in the United States participate in Bible study. What a challenge!

There will always be tensions and debates as to what our priorities should be, but someone has said, "Where everyone thinks the same no one thinks very much." So there needs to be a continual evaluation and probing. And may God help broaden the horizon and thinking of our General Conference.

Of course, we will make mistakes, but God can make good come out of our mistakes. Are we uncertain of the road? Is that why we vacillate on the subjects of abortion and homosexuality? Maybe we have gone around the mountain long enough (Deuteronomy 2:3). Hopefully the road will become clearer at Saskatoon.

Ward W. Shelly, 1110 Westminster Drive, Washington, IL 61571, is a retired GC pastor. He has helped out numerous congregations as interim pastor and continues to have a warm heart for the whole General Conference. His article is the first of a number that will call us to prayerful preparation for the July 21-27 sessions at Saskatoon. Plan now to participate.

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What kind of leadership is exercised in our churches today? And what is the biblical way to lead? Are there more ways than one?

This issue explores some of what happens in our churches and conferences. It makes some prescriptions also.

We believe the matter of leadership is one of the more critical needs for GC churches today.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Thy kingdom come

The world held its breath last Nov. 19 as Reagan and Gorbachev met in Geneva. It was the first meeting ever of these two superpower leaders and the first USA-USSR summit conference since 1979.

Just a few days earlier, Nov. 14-15, another "summit" meeting took place at Camp Lake, Wis. The General Board (GB)—our top leadership body—of the General Conference met in intense sessions that "culminated in a late-night prayer session" (see Dec. 10, 1985, issue, pp. 590-591). Out of that prayer session came what could become the most crucial leadership decision made in recent decades within GC circles.

At that meeting the GB decided to present the "Development Plan" at the July 21-27 Saskatoon triennial sessions.

That Development Plan may even at this time be one of the best-kept secrets in our conference. For some strange reasons I find that almost no one outside of conference officers and staff knows about its nature and intention.

The Development Plan goal is conference-wide spiritual renewal and commitment. Yes, that includes an aim for substantial dollar commitments.

If that goal should catch fire, this plan could be the best thing that has happened to our General Conference in many decades.

According to Gordon Houser's report on that GB meeting, our leaders "unanimously" agreed that the time is *now* for us to look at possibly radical changes ahead. GB members said it was "scary . . . a turning point . . . no more business as usual . . . a holy moment" (p. 591).

That's the kind of heady leadership our conference needs. It is the kind of creative initiative many prayed might happen at Geneva for the whole world.

"Setting our fix at Saskatoon '86" July 21-27 can become a reality. Delegates from our 345 member churches and another 100 related congregations will meet for a week of worship, study, prayer and deliberation around the theme "Thy Kingdom Come."

Quite the setting! Our focus will be on a key element in the Lord's Prayer. It says we can expect to see greater evidence of God's kingdom if we sincerely seek it.

It will surely "call our bluff." Will we simply convene another triennial session? Or will we have the courage to pursue the Lord's Prayer and to follow through on our chosen theme?

I believe General Conference members have been waiting for this kind of leadership. Spiritual renewal is overdue among us. Commitments need to be declared.

In many GC churches I see and hear strong trends to go outside our own leadership for help in evangelism, youth ministries, prayer and healing circles, Bible study guides, mission services, inner-life renewal and preparatory studies for church workers.

Our people want stronger direction from leadership. They deserve it. Too often it has felt as if we were a rudderless ship.

And this is where I still sense a badly missing link. The GB has had its "summit" and come to a crucial decision. So far so good. Now—sooner rather than later—this vision must be boldly and clearly shared with the whole General Conference. Let the secret out. What radical changes do you foresee? Tell us the commitments that will be called for.

This is a time to speak up and let us all know where GC leadership says, "Here I stand. . . ." Our leaders must interpret for us what the Development Plan is all about. Take the risks of spelling out the implications.

Yes, God's kingdom can become a greater reality among us. That will not happen by giving Saskatoon '86 delegates more catalogs of findings about human sexuality, leadership accountability or church planting. Delegates will not and should not be expected to settle for that. They must see the GB compass.

That unanimous decision at Camp Lake must be translated into people who dare to stand and be counted. We must together risk to claim the prayer "Thy kingdom come."

Otherwise this most potent leadership statement I have ever seen come from our General Board will become another "minute" neatly recorded for archivists to ponder in the future.

Let's together set our fix at Saskatoon '86: "Thy kingdom come." *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101.04 FEBRUARY 25, 1986

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Mennonite Voluntary Service

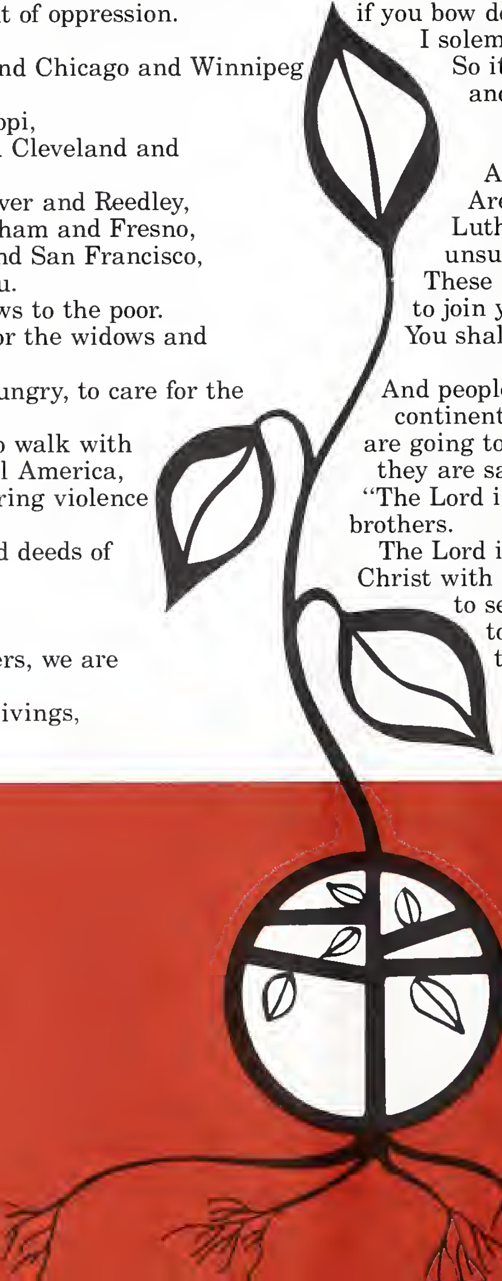
Now Mennonites are acquiring education and affluence in the Western world, and weekly they are going with their families to the house of the Lord. And an angel of the Lord appears to them in a flame of fire in their hearts, a flame that will not go out. And the Mennonites are saying, "We will turn aside and heed this burning in our hearts." And the Lord calls to them out of their hearts, "Mennonites, Mennonites!" And they say, "Here we are." And the Lord says, "Take off your shoes; you are on holy ground. I am the God of Sarah and Abraham, the God of Jacob and Moses, the God of Ruth and Esther, the God of Amos and Elijah, the God of Mary and Jesus, the God of many people of faith through the centuries. I have seen the affliction of my people who are poor in Canada and the United States; I have heard their cries because of their poverty; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them. Behold, the cry of the people has come to me. Come, I will send you to many places—to cities and to reservations, to peoples of differing races and cultures, to old and young—that you may bring them forth out of oppression.

"I will send you to Kansas City and Chicago and Winnipeg and Elkhart,
to Beatrice and Ames and Moencopi,
to Oklahoma City and Dallas and Cleveland and Hutchinson,
to Hamilton and Seattle and Denver and Reedley,
to Wichita and Liberal and Markham and Fresno,
to St. Catharines and St. Louis and San Francisco,
and to other places I will send you.
I will send you to preach good news to the poor.
I will send you to repair houses for the widows and children,
to give aid to the homeless and hungry, to care for the children,
to make peace and seek justice, to walk with those fleeing violence in Central America,
to walk and talk with those suffering violence at home.
I will send you to bring words and deeds of hope to those in despair."

And Mennonites are saying,
"Oh Lord, we are small in numbers, we are not eloquent in speech.
We are raising families, making livings,
becoming established in careers and professions.
Oh Lord, send someone else."
The patience of the Lord is tested by the Mennonites
and the Lord is saying,
"It is not only for the sake of the poor that I am calling you.
It is for your own well-being, it is for the sake of your soul,
lest your heart be lifted up and you forget the Lord your God
who brought you out of persecution, who rescued you from death.
Beware lest you say in your hearts,
our power and the might of our hands has gotten us this wealth.
You shall remember the Lord your God
for it is the Lord who gives you life.
And if you forget the Lord your God and go after other gods—
if you worship the gods of Comfort and Affluence,
if you bow down to National Security,
I solemnly warn you this day that you shall perish.
So it is for your sake I am calling you,
and for the sake of the poor in your lands and around the world.

And it is not only you whom I am calling.
Are there not Baptists and Presbyterians and
Lutherans and Catholics and Methodists and others
unsure of their identity?
These sisters and brothers of the Spirit are coming
to join you in this call.
You shall welcome them and serve together with them."

And people from many faith communities across the continent
are going to their families and to their congregations and they are saying,
"The Lord is calling us to go to hurting sisters and brothers.
The Lord is calling us to walk with them to follow the Christ with them,
to seek with them the ways of peace and justice,
to seek with them the ways of God,
to proclaim with them the salvation of the Lord."



Peter J. Ediger

Ho

And they give themselves to service in the name of Christ
for one year and for two years and for five
they give themselves to serve their neighbors and their Lord.

And seeds of hope are planted here and there
in community centers and in shelters and in schools
and in drop-in centers and in churches and on the streets
and in day-care centers and in houses of the poor and elderly
seeds of hope are planted
and flowers of faith grow here and there
and the bread of life is celebrated with thanksgiving.

But there are voices in the land saying,
"Cut back all aid, no more funds for the poor.
Let them find their own straw to build their shelters
Let them eat our surplus cheese and scraps from supermarkets
Let them huddle in their homes when heat is scarce."

And plagues come upon their lands
plagues of higher rents and lower resources
plagues of robbing poverty funds to pay proliferation of weapons funds
plagues of abortion and abuse and alcohol
plagues of loneliness and fear and hopelessness.

Janna Harold, from the Fresno MVS unit, serves as arts and crafts director for the Fresno Boys' and Girls' Club.

Jon Nafziger, from the Denver MVS unit, works with sanctuary for refugees.

And the Voluntary Servants together with people of faith in many places
are creating programs to aid those in need
they are joining hands and hearts in planting seeds of the New Creation
they are giving minds and bodies in the building of the New Creation.
With people of compassion they are planting seeds of faith and hope and love.

And the Lord is saying,
"Do you not say the kingdom harvest is in the future?
I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see the fields are already white for harvest.
The harvest is plentiful, the laborers are few.
Pray therefore the Lord of the Harvest to send out laborers into the harvest."

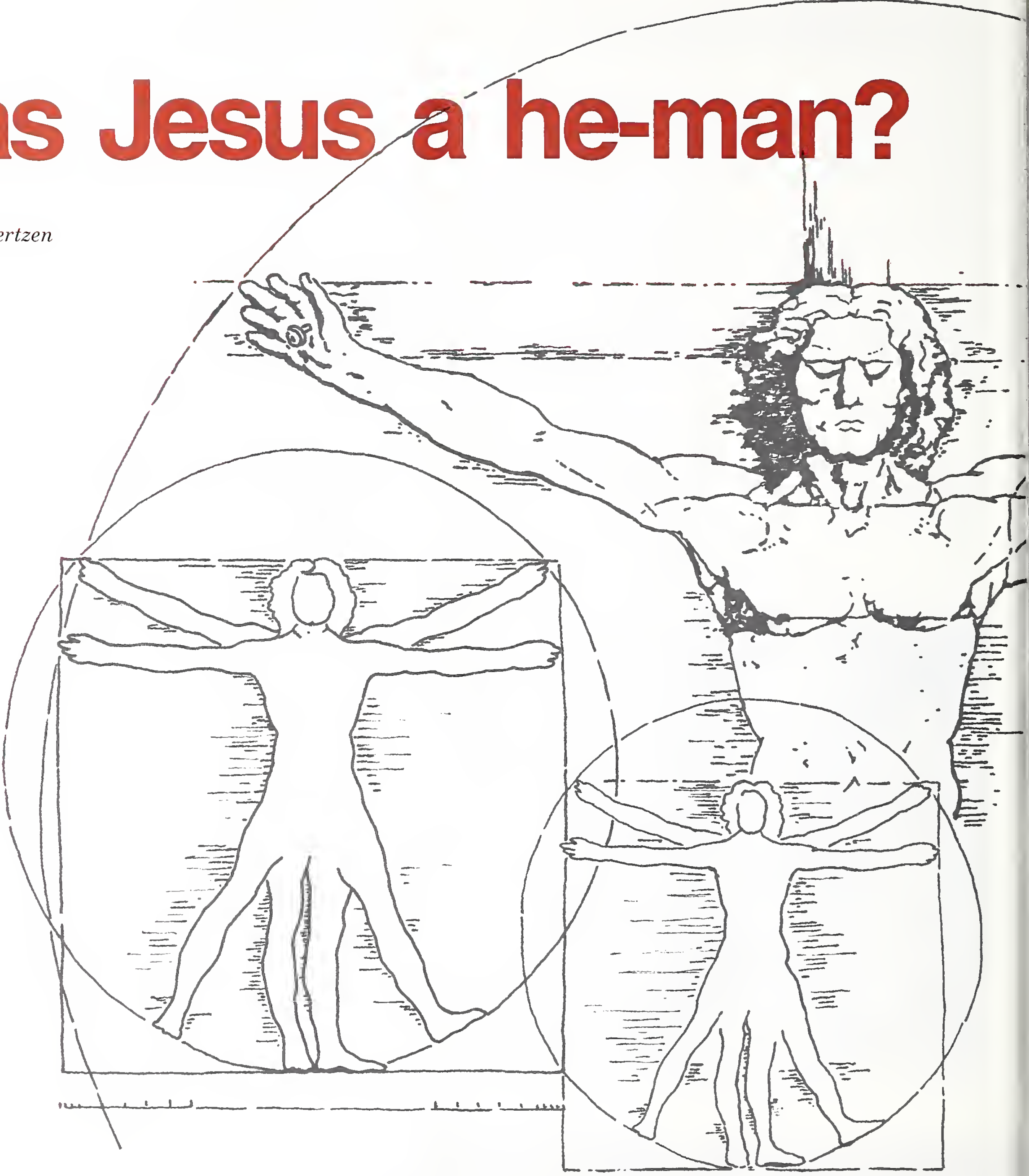
And from here and there and everywhere they come
for shorter and for longer times
they come to serve their neighbors and their Lord.

And there is rejoicing in heaven,
and there is hope on the earth.

y Ground

Was Jesus a he-man?

Galen W. Goertzen



Male. What does it mean to be a Christian male in today's world? Most males still tend to think of themselves as the dominant forces in society. But did God intend males to be the dominant, aggressive Clint Eastwoods that society idolizes?

Marc Feinsten Fasteau refers to society's perfect man as the "male machine." The male machine is one geared for work. He can take on just about any job and conquer it. Personal feelings for anybody or anything are virtually non-existent. He respects other males but refuses to become close friends with anyone. He can't show that kind of weakness (*The Male Machine*, p. 1).

Most of his relationships are with females. Women exist solely for the purpose of sustaining him. Even

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

"Greatness in the kingdom of God depends more on how far down you are than how close to the top."

though he depends on women for support, he will not open himself up to them. Harvey Cox says that "the story of man's refusal so to be exposed goes back to the story of Eden and is expressed by man's desire to control the other rather than to be with the other" (*The Secular City*, p. 200).

That is the key. Man must be in control of the circumstances around him, of the women in his life and especially of his emotions. He can never be vulnerable. This need for control expresses itself in other ways too. A man must be successful. He should own the biggest and most expensive car on the block, have the prettiest wife and be the best athlete. He must be a leader, aggressive and afraid of nothing. The ultimate expression of manhood is stated by Clint Eastwood as he looks down the barrel of a pistol. Coolly, evenly and even scornfully he growls, "Make my day." Even when he's facing death he's in control.

The drive for superiority is instilled in boys at a young age. From the time I got into school I realized the importance of being on top. The athletes were always looked up to as the important people in school. The ones that weren't good enough to be the stars were looked down on and teased. A boy couldn't show any sign of weakness either. If he ever showed emotions or cried he was considered a sissy. That's why many young boys have feelings of failure which carry into their adulthood. Men that refuse to express their emotions become emotionally incompetent. Hiding their emotions leads to increased stress. That is probably why men are the most susceptible to ulcers and heart disease (*New Men, New Roles*, p. 15). It is no wonder men have a shorter life expectancy.

Competitiveness and aggression often dominate male relationships. The worth of a man is often judged by his status and how much money he makes. He has to keep up with the Joneses. This job is never done. You never really reach the top. The only way to keep moving up is to stay aggressive. This leads to overwork. Uncountable marriages and friendships have probably been ruined by this need to be number one.

What should the Christian perspective be on this? Do we have a model to follow which can compete with Clint Eastwood, John Wayne and James Bond? The ultimate model for Christians should be Jesus Christ himself.

Was Jesus masculine? He seems unmasculine to today's culture. He didn't hold a job during the peak years of his life, let alone start his own company. He didn't seem to be rich. All he owned were the clothes on his back. He didn't do beer commercials or play professional football. Isaiah 53:2 says of him, "He had no dignity or beauty to make us take notice of him. There was nothing attractive about him, nothing that would draw us to him."

Jesus definitely didn't teach that success and status were the ultimate goals of life. He proved this during his wanderings in the wilderness. He was presented the chance to control the world—a man's dream. The devil took Jesus up to the top of a mountain and showed him the world. " 'All this I will give you,' the Devil said, 'if you kneel down and worship me' " (Matthew 4:9). He could have had the whole world worshiping and following him. But he knew that this would never truly bring him happiness.

His teachings illuminated that power and glory are a false illusion. John and James once came to him wanting part of Jesus' power and glory. Jesus' answer was backwards from what society would have said. "You know that the men who are considered rulers of the heathen have power over them, and the leaders have complete authority. This, however, is not the way it is among you. If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first, he must be last of all" (Mark 10:42-45).

Greatness in the kingdom of God depends more on how far down you are than how close you are to the top.

Jesus did not have a high opinion of riches either. He said at one time that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into heaven. Financial success is apparently not a prerequisite for entrance into the kingdom of God.

Jesus was not looking for power. He was willing to admit his dependence on others. He chose 12 disciples to help him carry out his work. He knew that he could not carry the whole load. He needed help.

He depended on God, his father, heavily. It is said he often went off by himself to pray. Jesus realized that all his power and strength came from God. He says in John 5:19: "I tell you the truth. The Son can do nothing on his own. He does only what he sees his father doing." Men today must live in the same spirit of dependence on God.

To be men today. Paul taught that we should be dependent on each other too. He compares the Christian church to a human body. Each person has a different role to fulfill, and we each depend on other people fulfilling theirs. "And so there is no division in the body, but all its different parts have the same concern for one another" (1 Corinthians 12:25).

Society holds the view that men should never show their feelings. Jesus didn't seem to consider this necessary to maintain his manhood. He went out of his way to show compassion for people. He not only expressed his love for the righteous, but he loved even the less desirable people: the poor, the sick, the elderly, the tax collectors and the Roman soldiers. He was "moved with compassion" for a leper. He even showed love and compassion for a sinful prostitute. He was gentle with and loved children. Even when the religious leaders came to get him in order to crucify him, he showed compassion. He healed one of the men who was coming to arrest him. This is opposite from today's society, where men are afraid to show love for anyone.

Jesus knew when it was time to weep. He wept for Lazarus when he died. He wept for the city of Jerusalem. He sobbed at the Garden of Gethsemane before he died. He knew what pain was and did not try to cover it up with false manliness. He knew that sorrow is nothing to be ashamed of.

However, Jesus was not a fainthearted sissy. He was the model of courage. He was willing to stand up and fight for justice. He took on some of the most powerful men in Palestine. He stood up against their customs and stated what he believed. He went into the Temple and chased out the moneychangers. He knew that they had the power to kill him at any time. But he stood firm on the fact that what he believed was right. In the end he showed enough courage to die for all humanity.

Maybe this is what manhood is all about: the compassion to love each other and the courage to stand up for each other. The Bible is full of men who showed such courage and love—Paul, Stephen, Peter and John.

Women too. But this kind of manhood is not just for men. Women like Deborah, Priscilla and Dorcas showed the same kind of strength. Jesus showed us what it means to be fully human. In his genuine expression of masculinity, he is the ultimate example to follow for both men and women.

In the end I wonder who was more masculine: the people who hung Jesus on the cross or the person who hung there for all humanity. •

MVS . . . round two

Perry and *Elizabeth Yoder*

From 1975 to 1977 our family spent two years in Mennonite Voluntary Service in a teaching ministry that took us across Canada and the United States several times. Now, 10 years later, we're back in MVS again.

At the beginning of our second round of MVS we lived in the Philippines for four months. That experience confirmed for us the importance of working here at home to do what we can about the way our countries contribute to unjust situations in the Third World.

Our unit is called the Shalom Unit and its mission is peace and justice education. For Perry the major assignment is teaching Old Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, but he also does other writing and teaching assignments that are in line with our mission. Elizabeth is a seminary student but also works at media monitoring and other justice work. The twins, Joel and Joshua, are high school freshmen.

Why are we in VS? Along with a group of people who call themselves the Service Order, we have covenanted "to order our economic lives so that we will not contribute to militarism and so we can free money and energy for actions which point to wholeness of life." Some but not all of the members of the Service Order have chosen MVS as the best way to live out that part of the covenant. Since we are in VS for an indefinite length of time, MVS has a special category for us, and the Service Order as a whole serves as our reference council.

The way our unit works is not much different from other MVS units. All the income that Perry earns as a professor and Elizabeth earns in her part-time job at the seminary is sent to Mennonite Voluntary Service. Each month we report our expenses to MVS and are reimbursed. The surplus stays in Newton in the "Shalom MVS" account.

When there is a project for which we would like to use these funds, we request the amount needed and, if our request is approved, it is sent to us for that purpose. For example, last summer we were able to help a friend in the Philippines buy a motorcycle so that he could travel among the Basic Christian Communities he is helping organize. We have also been able to help a Filipino theological student continue her education.

Of course there are all kinds of things the money can't be used for. We can't buy a microwave or a VCR, for example. We can't save for our sons' education or for the perfect vacation. But on the other hand, the money can't be used for B-1 bombers or MX missiles. It can't be used to prop up the Marcos regime in the Philippines or to give aid to the contras in Nicaragua.

Being in MVS gives our lives a focus other than putting food on the table and trying to get ahead financially or just doing a good job in our professions. Since any money we earn goes into the Shalom MVS account and not to us personally, we ask ourselves before accepting assignments, "Is this how we want to spend unit time?" or, "For what will we use this extra money?" For example, we hope that the extra income from Elizabeth's part-time job will enable us to bring a Third World professor to AMBS for an interterm or even a semester.

Looking back at an article I (Elizabeth) wrote for *The Mennonite* in 1975, I see that even then we thought of our project as an experiment with VS as a lifestyle. I wrote, "VS has long been seen as viable only for single people or childless couples. We want to work toward a model of a viable lifestyle for all segments of the church (all ages, all classes) that will neither be overly consumptive nor inhumanly frugal" ("Called to Be Dandelions," Aug. 19, 1975, issue).

So far, that has been true of MVS the second time around. We have the security of knowing that our basic needs will be met. We have the satisfaction of knowing that our surplus funds are being used for the things we believe in. And we have a structure that helps us direct our energy toward God's shalom.

Perry and Elizabeth Yoder, 1617 Roys Ave., Elkhart, IN 46516, describe their work with the Shalom MVS Unit.

***Left** to right: Joshua, Perry, Elizabeth and Joel Yoder of the Shalom MVS Unit in 1985.*

Elizabeth and Perry Yoder, together with their twins, when they served as "People's Teachers of the Word" from 1975-77.

Service is the Christian lifestyle

Helen Unrau

In the early days of his ministry, Jesus came to attend the synagogue in his hometown—Nazareth. He was given the book of Isaiah to read. This is what he read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19).

He then said, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21).

This was for Jesus a clear mandate for service while on this earth. He fulfilled this mandate by becoming a servant to all. He healed the sick, set free those who were oppressed. He challenged people to leave all and follow him, and wherever he went he preached good news to the poor.

Before he left this earth, he gave a similar mandate to his disciples, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I will be with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

This is also our mandate today. To follow Christ means to serve as he served—with the gifts that have been entrusted to us.

The importance of service has been instilled in me by faithful teaching in my home congregation. Through this teaching I became aware that service was a way of life; that I was serving God when I worked as a nurse in the hospital and in the doctor's office. I was also drawn into service in my congregation, beginning with singing in the choir, teaching Sunday school, working on committees and later serving as Sunday school superintendent and as full-time Christian education director. I enjoyed these areas of service and I received many blessings and experienced spiritual growth as a result. I was grateful that I could serve my home congregation in these many and various ways. I had often thought about voluntary service outside of my home community as a good experience, but somehow the time had not ever seemed right.

Deborah Spooner, above right, Denver West MVS unit, coordinates low-income housing plans. Rhonda Shoenmaker, below, Wichita MVS unit, cares for a child as a community health nurse. In all cases MVS tries to meet needs that would likely not be served without volunteers. And they try to do it as a Christian lifestyle.

Then came the crossroads. I felt that my work in my home congregation was coming to a close. What was to be my next place of service?

As I searched for direction, I was again reminded of voluntary service and thought about it seriously. The doubts and fears of launching out at age 55 into such a venture were real. I continued to explore other options, but as doors closed it became clear that voluntary service at Welcome Inn Community Centre and Church in Hamilton, Ont., was most suitable.

This meant uprooting from my home congregation, hometown, family and friends. Not an easy task. However, with the support of family and many friends, I was able to make the move.

The change of location was drastic. Moving from a small town, predominantly middle-class Mennonite, and a church community of 600 members to a low-income community setting in a city and a church community of 40-60 people.

I have experienced service here to be the same in many ways. It means interacting with people, loving and caring about them. It means doing all the things that need doing—visitation, quilting, baking, leading a club or teaching Sunday school, assisting in the worship service or giving transportation to people. However, in learning to relate to people in a different socioeconomic setting, I am being challenged to rethink some of our approaches to serving the poor among us, along with our lifestyle values.

Mennonite Voluntary Service is giving me another valuable perspective of service that I deeply cherish. It is again being affirmed to me that service is a way of life no matter what the setting.

Welcome Inn has proved to be the place where I feel God wants me to serve at this time. The work is challenging. The warmth of co-workers and community people is great. God is at work in our midst, and people's lives are being changed.

Christ has said, "Truly, I say unto you, as you did it unto the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me" (Matthew 25:39b).

Helen Unrau from Altona, Man., works with the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit at 177 Wood St. E., Hamilton, ON L8L 3Y8.

Interview with James Chung-Fu Liu

James C. Liu, won to Christ through early GC missionaries in China, was baptized in 1922. Now 81, Liu visited in the United States and Canada last fall. A former student of Bluffton (Ohio) College and of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., he visited both institutions. Elmer Neufeld, president of Bluffton College, had the following conversation with James Liu.

Elmer Neufeld: Please tell us a bit about your family, your parents, your wife, and your son and his family.

James Liu: My family members are as follows: My father was a farmer, and my mother was a good housekeeper. Both of them were faithful Christians. My wife, Hazel, was a registered nurse and a faithful Christian. Timothy is our only son, and he works in a factory as an electrician. His wife is a high school teacher. They have two sons: the older one, Paul, is 16 years old and is in his second year of senior high school. The younger one, John, is 13 years old and is in his third year of junior high school.

Neufeld: How did you become a Christian?

Liu: When I was a boy, the Chinese people did not know much about Christianity. I began to attend church when I was 7 years old—with my parents. The first time I attended catechism class some of our relatives told me, "If you join the church or believe in Jesus Christ the foreigners will take you to other countries and dig out your heart and your eyes." When I heard that, I quit going to church for some time. As I grew older, I realized that was not true. So I began attending catechism class again. Finally, I became a Christian in 1922.

Neufeld: What are some of the things you remember about the early Mennonite missionaries?

Liu: I went to the General Conference Mennonite mission elementary school in 1916. H. J. Brown was the principal. In 1917 E. G. Kaufman came to China and set up a junior high school in 1923. I graduated from the junior high school in 1924. Mrs. E. G. Kaufman and Mrs. A. M. Lohrentz were our English teachers. A. M. Lohrentz was our mission medical doctor. I also remember C. L. Pannabecker, S. F. Pannabecker and their families, also Sam J. Goering and W. C. Voth and their families.

Neufeld: How did it happen that you came to America in 1930 to study at Bluffton College?

Liu: E. G. Kaufman was the principal of our mission high school. He knew me quite well. In the spring of 1930 he made arrangements for Stephen Wang and me to come to Bluffton College.

Neufeld: What are some of the things you remember about your experience at Bluffton?

Liu: In the fall of 1930, when I first came to Bluffton College, I felt everybody was so friendly and helpful to me. I liked Bluffton College very much because it is a small, fine Christian school. It was quite easy for me to keep contacts with teachers and fellow students. I am proud of being one of the first China Education Exchange students at Bluffton College in 1930-31.

Elmer Neufeld

Neufeld: I understand that after the war you worked for a time with Mennonite Central Committee in China.

Liu: In spring 1946 my wife, Hazel, and I left our native town, Kaichow (now called Puyang), and came to Kaifeng. At that time the MCC unit was at Kaifeng. S. F. Pannabecker asked me and my wife to work with MCC. I worked as an interpreter and in the office of the headquarters. Sometimes I went out with other members to do investigation. Then in 1948 I worked with the Hengyang orphanage run by MCC until after liberation in 1951.

Neufeld: What was your experience as a Christian pastor and teacher during the Cultural Revolution?

Liu: During the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 I was compelled to join the movement. I was locked in one room for three years. Nobody was allowed to see me—not even my wife. I slept on several school desks which were put together with no mattress. I ate food consisting of old vegetable leaves and rice cooked together. There was no salt or any other thing in it. They said I was a spy and a running dog of the American missionaries. I was humiliated by the Red guards. I was severely criticized because I was a Christian and an intellectual.

Neufeld: What is happening in the church in China today?

Liu: After liberation the Christian churches in China were allowed to carry on their church work. But during the Cultural Revolution nobody was allowed to believe in religion. The Christians had to turn in or destroy their Bibles and hymnbooks and other Christian literature. In 1976 the Gang of Four was smashed. Since then our new government has given freedom to believe in Christian religion. Many churches have been reopened now. They are getting along nicely.

Neufeld: We have heard that there are no longer Mennonite churches or denominational churches in China but only "three-self" churches. What does this mean?

Liu: Now the names of all churches in China have been changed into the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Church. There are no denominations. The churches in China are all operated by the Chinese church members. They are independent churches not run by the government. The condition of the Chinese churches is quite promising. The Chinese Christians think they should love our Lord and at the same time they should love their country.

Neufeld: How can we as Christians in America help to build relationships with China and the people of China?

Liu: I think that the China Education Exchange program is a good way to help build a better relationship with China. The teachers and students can exchange their experiences and their cultures so they can know each other better. Mutual visits and mutual correspondence can also promote good relationships between our countries.

Neufeld: Do you have anything else that you would like to share with Christians in America?

Liu: First, the thing I think very important is that we need your prayers for the Chinese churches. I think we should forget all the unhappy things in the past and work hard to complete the task given by our Lord. Try to keep good relations between the Chinese and American people and pass this on to the next generation. I would like to give Romans 8:28 as a gift to our American Christian friends—"We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose."

Neufeld: When Mother Teresa was here from India, she said that the material needs in India are greater than the material needs in America, but that the spiritual needs in America may well be greater than the spiritual needs in India. And that may also be true for us in relationship to China.

* * *

When James Liu was in Winnipeg, the editor of *The Mennonite* also had opportunity to visit with him.

Among other struggles, James told how he and his wife, Hazel, agonized during the Cultural Revolution when all Christian literature was forbidden. They finally buried their Bibles and other Christian literature. That made them feel guilty, so they dug them out and burned them instead. This did not feel good either, and they prayed to God for forgiveness about it.

While there is no Mennonite church or denomination in China today, Liu is glad to point out that numerous former Mennonite leaders are now leaders in the church.

Recently the churches have put more emphasis on youth. In his own church, 12 were baptized at Christmas 1984, another seven at Easter, and recently two were sent off to seminary.

When asked about first impressions upon coming back to America, Liu said he found Mennonites friendly over 50 years ago and found them so still in 1985. But he was struck by the big highways congested with automobiles and by the many, many new buildings everywhere.

As a concerned grandfather, James Liu had been trying to teach his two grandsons to read the Bible in English. While they are interested in the language, he said that progress had been slow. Now, on his visit, he found other than the old King James Version. It made him glad. He believes they will be much more ready to read the New International Version.

Concerning Bibles in general, Liu said half the Christians in China now have Bibles. And though the Chinese Bible Society is busy printing more, they have difficulty keeping pace with the demand.

James Liu chats with editor Bernie Wiebe.

Early winter

Reynold Siemens

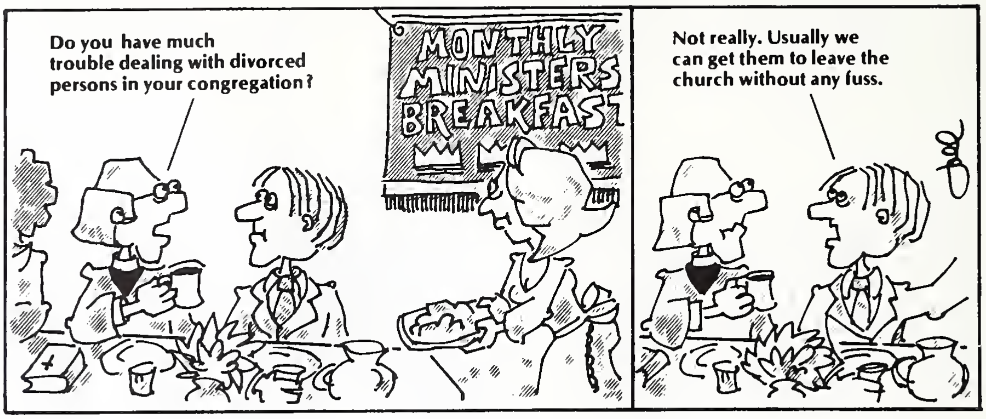
Sweet vernal showers and youth's delight have passed,
And May's first flowers adorn the path no more;
The driving snow, the chilling icy blast
Come from the dark, in from the darkening moor.

Like birds, long flown, with their sweet notes forgot,
Spring's sounds that music were, no more will quiver;
Like soft tones drawn from strings, once gently wrought,
Night closes all, and they are stilled forever.

Wasted autumn leaves lift up in flight—
As phantom clouds, that mark the calling wind,
Deep solstice shadows hasten to the night:
The year's last moments quickening to their end.

To youth and spring, these soon forgotten things,
The dying year a sadness ever brings.

Sisters and Brothers


Do you have much trouble dealing with divorced persons in your congregation?
MONTHLY MINISTERS BREAKFAST
Not really. Usually we can get them to leave the church without any fuss.

NEWS

Money woes discussed

CMC Council of Boards focuses on three Fs

Winnipeg (GCMC)—Three Fs—finances, facilities and fund raising—dominated the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's annual Council of Boards here Feb. 6-8.

After several excellent years for CMC financially, the treasurer's report this year began, "The past year has been a poor financial year for the conference. A cash deficit of just over $127,000 resulted from the 1985 operations." Congregational giving came in at 94.4 percent of the budget.

This financial dilemma created scrambling within the boards to adjust 1986 spending plans and projections.

Adding to the budget-income problem in 1985 was the new figure quoted to pay for phase one of the projected facilities expansion. Reported to the Regina (1985) sessions to cost about $1.85 million, the updated drawings for phase one shown to the Council of Boards had a price tag estimated at $2.4 million.

The facilities expansion in phase one would include overdue office facilities for college and conference staff, new office space for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, new lounges and music rooms in the student residence, a regulation size gym and new access to the total complex.

One decision provoked by the discussion on facilities was to go back and see if the price can be brought down. Otherwise the plan is to be brought before CMC delegates this July in Waterloo, Ont.

The matter of fund raising became crucial for at least three reasons: (1) The operating budget needs undergirding. (2) The facilities project is to have the major portion of funding in place before building. (3) The General Conference is considering a Development Plan at this summer's sessions in Saskatoon. Part of it involves a fund-raising strategy that hopefully will become an effort undertaken in Canada by GC, CMC and provincial conference bodies.

Native Ministries co-executive secretary Vera Funk goes over their budget figures carefully with a calculator.

To minimize budget cuts, CMC administrators were authorized to solicit corporate and private donations above regular church giving.

Discussion indicated a readiness to go in with the GC Development Plan and use it to raise money for the facilities expansion. This, of course, must await the action taken at Saskatoon.

To augment this process, a new stewardship development committee was voted into existence. Its task will be to work on overall stewardship, while the finance committee continues to care for the operating budget.

The Congregational Resources Board reported it had been "too successful" with its new Every Home Plan emphasis. Since offering free trial subscriptions to *Mennonite Reporter* in 1985 and now offering subscriptions at heavily subsidized prices, they gained about 2,500 new subscribers. This was now causing a strain on the CRB budget.

CRB also reported that they were not going ahead with plans to phase in administrative and financial responsibility for *Der Bote*. The motion to do so, in their report, was defeated. Also mentioned was that the endorsement of *Mennonite Reporter* as the CMC conference vehicle has resulted in about a 20 percent drop of Canadian subscribers to *The Mennonite*.

In an unusual turn, the 1986 Council of Boards was affected by two deaths. On Feb. 6 a special memorial service to Frank H. Epp (who died Jan. 22) was programmed into the schedule. While this service was in progress, several people were called out and told that Gerhard Lohrenz, another conference leader, had died suddenly.

A budget of $1,834,153 in church giving—including the $120,000 in corporate and private gifts—was adopted for 1986. This is 8 percent above 1985 receipts. Total operating budget was set at $3,217,165.

The 1986 annual CMC sessions will be held July 3-8 at Wilfred Laurier University, Waterloo, Ont. *Bernie Wiebe*

"Until you are affirmed, you have no power to make peace," say James and Kathleen McGinnis of St. Louis, educators in Parenting for Peace and Justice. Peace and conflict management begin at home and have global implications. Intentionally prayerful and scripturally based, this concentration on parenting is, say the leaders, "God's call." Sixty-four people from eight denominations came together Jan. 24-26 at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., for a leadership training seminar led by the McGinnises. Every district and province of the General Conference sent representatives.

Habitat for Humanity project in Zaire

When houses are dedicated in Zaire the event is called "an inauguration." Habitat for Humanity, to whom General Conference missionaries Glen and Phyllis Boese are seconded by Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, recently had six houses ready for occupation. In 1985 each house cost 100-110,000 Zaires. At 55Z to a dollar, the homes cost slightly under $2,000.

Seminar focuses on roots of pornography and violence

Winnipeg—"Some of us don't want to acknowledge the problem," was the opinion of one participant at a seminar on pornography and sexual violence held here Jan. 25. This one-day event, sponsored by the peace and social concerns committee of MCC Manitoba, attracted about 100 people to the Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church.

Representation was good from General Conference and Mennonite Brethren circles, though some expressed disappointment in the lack of participation by MB leaders. The presence of three black-suited Old Colony leaders from the Winkler, Man., area sparked interest on the part of many there and attested to the severity of the problem of sexual violence among Mennonites. One of these leaders, Abram Driedger, admitted that family violence among their church members and adherents was larger than the church leadership could handle, and they had come to listen and learn.

The presentations and discussions throughout the day repeatedly returned to the roots of the problem, although not all could agree that pornography and sexual violence were power issues. Liz Coffman opened the day's discussion with insights and information gained from her work with the Pornography Sub-Committee of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. She pointed to the widespread availability of pornography in Winnipeg stores and outlined how this does violence to women. "It is an industry based on women's pain," she said, cautioning the audience to acknowledge that none are exempt from the effects of pornography, since the attitudes of subordination and exclusion of women that it portrays is part of all society.

David Schroeder, professor at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, outlined a theological perspective on the roots of pornography and sexual violence. According to Schroeder, a wrong understanding of creation is a major aspect of the problem. "If we do not understand creation properly we will not understand ourselves properly." A misinterpretation of creation has led us to a misunderstanding of dominion, causing humans to exploit and rule over nature and other humans. Schroeder cautioned that such an interpretation of dominion is a perversion, since "God never does violence to the person he created."

Three women spoke on the various faces of pornography and sexual violence. Diana Brandt, graduate student in English, made the point that women do not have the language to speak against violence and domination. "It is hard to learn to speak as a woman in the church because most of our words are men's words." Women must learn to speak of that which is female and "learn to defend the fragility of the earth against those who seek to dominate." According to Brandt, those who use the language of domination have the same motive as the pornographer. Brandt's presentation created much discussion that represented a wide range of perspectives, but also underlined her main point, as in the statement of one woman who responded, "I would like to speak for the women who are not speaking."

Jane Ursel, who works for the Manitoba government in the area of family violence, gave hard facts on the growing reports of abuse in Manitoba. Since 1983, 4,000 people have been charged with domestic assault, 95 percent of them men. Ursel discounted the common myths around abuse (abusers abuse because they are abused, and victims seek out violence) and characterized those who abuse as "highly dependent on their spouses emotionally . . . they feel their life is out of control, and they abuse to feel in control."

In her treatment of media pornography, Margaret Loewen Reimer, associate editor of *Mennonite Reporter*, focused on the assumptions and connections in mass media. She argued that the "urge toward violence is a basic human condition," and as humans we must learn to deal with it. Television portrays violence in fuzzy terms and has perverted violence to the extent where good and evil can no longer be identified. Reimer pointed out that television as a medium is more violent than its content, because of its mind-numbing quality.

Moderator John H. Neufeld led three panelists in a discussion of how the reality of pornography and sexual violence is encountered in our churches. The audience listened attentively to the perspectives of counselor Mary Regehr and youth worker Abe Bergen, and paid special attention to the experiences of Martha Bergmann as past coordinator of the Morden/Winkler Committee on Family Violence. She spoke of the struggle her group underwent to become established in that predominantly Mennonite area, and the pain of the abused women when their churches told them to "go home and be a better wife." Bergmann and others in the audience testified to the high incidence of incest and wife abuse in southern Manitoba and attitudes common to some that "fathers have the right to break in their daughters."

James Pankratz identified the topic as one of violence through misuse of male power: "Why do we make this a women's issue . . . it's not. I'm a man and we are the problem . . . we must be part of the solution." *Brenda Suderman*

Manitoba Choice Resources' John Whitehead now has an account in the Winnipeg airport. There had been no Choice Books racks in Canadian airports previously. Northern District Choice Books honored volunteer Lois Roberton, who has serviced the Choice Books rack at Miller (S.D.) Rexall Drug for five years.

Central America Week, a time for North American Christians to think about and pray for peace in Central America, is scheduled for March 16-24. The theme for the week is "The Hope for Peace in Central America." Packets for the week that include suggestions for worship, a poster, fact sheet on refugees, annotated listing of resources produced by various church groups on Central America and other information are available for $3.50 each from Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 563, New York, NY 10115.

Adult advocates for youth in Mennonite congregations are slipping down on the job, say Lavon Welty, associate secretary for Congregational Youth Ministries of the Mennonite Board of Congregational Resources, and Daniel Schipani, professor of Christian education and personality at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Their grant application has been approved to study why involvement in the Mennonite Church's Life Planning Program has waned in the last few years. The main weak link in the program, they say from preliminary findings, "is the adult who serves as the youth's advocate."

MCC explores connection between hunger and militarism

Denver (Meetinghouse)—Concern about a decision to ship less food and lengthy discussions about war taxes and evangelism highlighted the Jan. 31-Feb. 1 Mennonite Central Committee annual meeting here.

Board members learned that MCC shipped a record 36,000 metric tonnes of aid—much of it to Ethiopia and Sudan—last year but that staff expect to send less in 1986. "The rains have come to Africa," said disaster coordinator Paul Myers, explaining the decrease.

He added that the presence of large amounts of relief money, raised by groups such as Live Aid, figured in MCC's decision.

Some board members quickly voiced their concern. "Are we telling our supporters to give less?" asked MCC Canada representative Siegfried Bartel. The answer, Myers responded, is a qualified yes. "We need less food now than we did in the last two years," he said, noting that MCC would be prepared to send more if a disaster occurs.

In discussing African relief efforts, the board was reminded that the connection between hunger and warfare is "no longer a matter of debate." But the issue of paying taxes which support increased militarization is a matter of considerable—and painful—debate.

Discussion about payment of U.S. federal income taxes used for military purposes—or "war taxes"—was prompted by a request from four MCC Akron employees who asked MCC to stop forwarding the portion of their income taxes which go for military spending. In letters last year to the executive committee, the four cited deployment of missiles in Europe, U.S. funds for war in Central America, MCC's support of conscientious objection during the Vietnam War and the deaths of friends killed by American-made weapons as basis for the request.

Paul Myers, MCC South Asia secretary, recognizes Rosella Toews, who has served for 36 years in Asia.

A tax withholding task force reported to the board that, after discussions with eight Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conferences, "no group counseled MCC to honor the requests." MCC Canada indicated that payment of military taxes is not an issue among Canadians "at this time." The task force recommended that MCC "continue to withhold and forward taxes to the (U.S.) government."

Possible penalties for not forwarding an employee's tax include the amount plus interest, a $10,000 fine and/or five years imprisonment.

Board member Phil Rich, who served on the task force, emphasized that conference leaders "agonized" over the decision and observed that "none of the groups said that civil disobedience is absolutely wrong." Some of the leaders, he indicated, "are in favor but do not think their people will go along."

He also noted that most conferences are open to dealing with the issue in the future.

During a lengthy discussion, board members wrestled with the issue. Ray Brubacher, a Canadian, indicated that his church allows him to withhold the military portion of his income tax. "I cannot," he said, "vote against their request if I can [have taxes not withheld] myself. I don't want to vote against the constituency, but I cannot vote against my conscience."

Larry Kehler of the General Conference noted that his denomination had decided in 1983 not to forward the tax of individuals who had made such a request. As a member of that conference, he indicated that he "could not vote for the recommendation." Both said that their vote would be made with "much pain."

Other board members shared their pain but agreed with MCC Canada representative Ross Nigh that "we are bound by the process. We went to the conferences in good faith, and not one recommended that we withhold taxes. In the interest of the wider brotherhood, we must vote for it." The recommendation passed with four against and two abstentions.

The board also passed recommendations that affirm the four and others who make a similar request and that encourage MCC to find ways for them to resist payment legally. Staff were also encouraged to increase efforts to educate the churches about the relationship between militarism, hunger, development and refugees.

The task force also suggested that MCC and the conferences hold a study conference on church/state issues.

In a prepared response, Earl Martin read a statement on behalf of the four that expressed appreciation for the process and deliberation but appealed to the conferences to discuss the issue at their next annual conventions. The four also asked MCC to help facilitate the discussion and invited the conferences to report their findings at the 1988 MCC annual meeting.

Martin also pointed out that while U.S. members of MCC's seven constituent conferences donated $9.4 million to

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THE MENNONITE
ASSOCIATED MENNONITE
biblical SEMINARIES EDITION

AMBS BULLETIN
February 25, 1986

Faith of our youth: a preliminary report

Jerry Holsopple and *Phil Yoder*

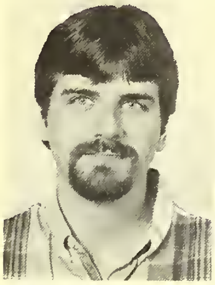
How important are parents in the transference of faith and moral behavior patterns? A majority of youth in Mennonite churches (MC and GC) in the United States say that their parents are "the most important for helping make moral decisions."

In a survey we conducted as part of an independent study at seminary, 55 percent of the youth ranked parents number one, and another 35 percent ranked parents in second or third place. This is only one indication of the important role parents play in the future of their children and in the future of the church.

The survey, which we are in the process of analyzing, was designed to give us a picture of some of the factors that go into the socialization process of Mennonite youth. From the survey we expect to derive a picture of what the average high school student attending a Mennonite church is like and what their parents are like.

The survey was administered to 234 high school youth and one parent of each, representing a return rate of 67 percent of the scientifically chosen sample. Eight percent of the unreturned sample—ready for mailing—burned in the church at Freeman, S.D., when it went up in flames last fall. The sample area covers both the General Conference and Mennonite Church youth and parents in the United States.

We measured beliefs, opinions, behaviors and some lifestyle demographics. We hope to see, as we tabulate responses, the effect of factors such as family devotions, personal spiritual habits, church and youth fellowship attendance patterns and giving patterns in their relationship to beliefs and knowledge of the Bible. The respondents were asked a number of biblical literacy questions. For example, they were asked to identify the location of the Easter story in the Bible from the choices of Genesis, John, Acts or Revelation. Seventy percent of the youth and 86 percent of the parents answered correctly.


Holsopple

Yoder

We also were interested in how the youth and parents deal with some of the traditional Mennonite beliefs and if they are familiar with Mennonite history. The respondents were asked to identify the leaders of the Anabaptist Reformation from the choices of Menno Simons, Martin Luther, Thomas Aquinas and Hans Hut. Only 44 percent of the youth and 56 percent of the parents differentiated between Menno Simons and Martin Luther. Has Luther become Anabaptist? Fifteen percent of the youth did not choose Menno Simons at all.

Parents have differing ideas of what they want to pass on to their children. Twenty-eight percent want to pass on faith, 19 percent the knowledge of God and 15 percent love and acceptance. Twenty-three percent of the surveyed youth have trouble getting along with their father. Thirty-two percent of the parents have attended graduate school; 63 percent are somewhere in their 40s. (These statistics seem to indicate that we are becoming more a part of modern society.) Forty-five percent of the families have moved in the last 10 years but only 14 percent of the families currently live in cities bigger than 50,000.

Other topics that we are studying in this project are drug and alcohol use among parents and youth, dating (55 percent do not or rarely date), sexual practices and school and youth fellowship activities (68 percent participate in sports, 64 percent in school music programs and 73 percent in youth fellowship three or more times a month). We will also tabulate views on issues such as divorce, abortion and homosexuality. We will examine the influence of media on values and the actual amount and type of consumption of TV, music and movies (25 percent of youth and 41 percent of the parents think TV and movies show too much violence).

We also want to know how affluence and use of money has affected the Mennonite family and traditional Mennonite values. The median range income of the families of high school students in the Mennonite church is $25,000-$40,000.

The survey contains approximately 200 questions for the youth and 200 for the father or mother. Robert Ramseyer is the advising professor, and Duane Kaufman, a psychology professor at Goshen (Ind.) College, has served as a consultant for the survey design and implementation. We undertook the project in January 1985.

The project expenses are being funded by a Shalom Funds grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid. We are now completing tabulations and correla-

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Closeup: Why I teach at AMBS

As one who is trained to look for the dramatic, for that which is vivid, it saddens me deeply to hear the superb story of the gospel, the fantastic yet vivid story of God's people mumbled in an uninteresting way from the pulpit. We have a superlative message but have a packaging problem.

It never occurred to me that I might some day teach at a seminary. I bring to my teaching not the ears of one highly trained in theology, but rather the ears of the people in the pew. My training and skills in public speaking give me some techniques for helping students become more effective communicators of the gospel.

Working with Erland Waltner these past few years has been exciting as we put together our different strengths. Erland's biblical knowledge and experience in preaching are strong assets to the program.

I have never preached a three-point sermon; however, three "p" words come to mind of what every preacher should have—prayer, purpose, passion. *June Alliman Yoder*

Yoder

Why I came to AMBS: a survey

What do students say brought them to AMBS? Eighty students responded to a survey I did last fall. Ten checked Anabaptist emphasis, 10—family or friend, 9—AMBS student or alumnus and 9—faculty writings or contacts.

Overall the most important factors were (1) the awareness of our Anabaptist emphasis and the influence of the faculty, (2) the persuasion of a friend, family member, alumnus, student or a church leader and (3) encouragement from one's pastor or congregation. Campus visits, contact with admission staff and the impact of printed material were less important.

When did you decide? Twenty people made their decision to attend seminary at ages 20-24, 31 at ages 25-29, 11 at ages 30-34, nine at ages 35-39 and 13 were above 40. Surprisingly, only two people said that their decision to come to seminary was made before age 20. The evidence says that few had definite plans to prepare for ministry until some years beyond the normal college age span.

Where was the decision made? Twenty-seven indicated that they were already involved in some form of church work either in congregations, church schools or MCC assignments, or were concerned for missions. Twenty-six others processed their decision in the context of the congregation (many of these were in small groups or small church fellowships) or while doing undergraduate studies. Twelve of the latter reflect the influence of a Mennonite college.

Source of affirmation and support. Thirty-two said their congregation or conference was involved in their decision to come to AMBS and helped with financial aid. On the other hand, 17 indicated that they received no affirmation or support in their decision, with half of them feeling they were actually discouraged in the process. Many of these replies came more as a lament than a criticism or judgment. One student wrote, "It would be wonderful to have a congregation backing me financially, affirming my gifts and call in this way."

Suggestions. Seventeen students wished for congregation or conference help in discerning the call and for being more open and positive about the need for leaders. One person mentioned the need for more intentional gift discernment, while another called for being more positive about theological education. Sixteen focused more on the need for financial assistance while preparing to serve the church.

Because I am a woman. One student, whose gifts are already being widely used in Christian education work, speaks for others: "Perhaps because I am a woman, I experienced very little encouragement from 'official' groups. In fact, I would say that both the congregation and conference—in recent years—were discouraging me from further development that would involve spiritual leadership. Had I not sensed a strong inner calling, I would not have considered coming."

Another student said, "I feel our churches (i.e. local congregations and pastors as well as conference-level leadership) need consciousness-raising on the importance of affirming and discerning gifts, then following through with encouragement and financial support." Most students, I believe, would agree with the comment, "I am very, very grateful for my years of work at AMBS. I shall be a good advocate of our programs here." *Jim Metzler, admissions counselor*

Faith of our youth

continued

tions and anticipate having results available by this fall.

We are convinced of the strong role that parents play in faith transference. We are also convinced that this is not something that just happens but is the product of parents consciously living out their faith in such a way as to be a positive example of faith. Fifty-nine percent of the youth said that their parents were the most important in helping them acquire their religious beliefs. We are deliberately looking at the reported behavior of the youth and parents since we believe that behavior is an important index of the person's beliefs. Thanks to all the youth, parents, church leaders and others who have made this survey possible.

Off campus

LeRoy Friesen will participate as a respondent in the March 1-5 Mennonite Health Association convention in Denver. He will be the speaker for the Central District Conference (GC) and a workshop leader on Shalom Theology at the SCUPE Urban Congress in Chicago.

Roelf Kuitse, accompanied by his wife, Juliette, will visit Mennonite workers in east and southern Africa on a four-month visit, beginning in mid-February, on behalf of Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite mission boards. He plans to teach on the relationship between Islam and Christianity and make individual visits with workers and with leaders in African Independent Churches. "I look forward to meeting former students who are now working in Africa."

Willard Swartley will serve Menno-

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Seminary children lead Christmas chapel

The annual Christmas chapel by the children in the seminary community has become a tradition. Behind the scenes is a story of how Christmas has come to campus every day of the school year.

Children of seminary families can be enrolled in the AMBS Parents' Cooperative Nursery, which offers day-time care for children during class hours. Last semester an average of 35 children were enrolled.

The nursery moved in late 1985 from basement rooms to remodeled quarters in a ground-level four-plex apartment. The renovated facility offers enlarged floor space, play room, crib room, storage, kitchen facilities and laundry, and is conveniently located to an outdoor play area. While AMBS provides the space, the parents' cooperative is responsible for renovation and operation costs. A major gift for renovations was provided by Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Additional funding is needed.

The staff includes three part-time teachers—Tanneken Fros (head teacher), Esther Wiebe and Bertie Horst. Volunteers help in caring for the children and in taking turns cleaning and providing snacks.

The nursery committee sees its program as a service not only to parents but for the whole seminary community, say operations coordinators Ann and Randy Smith, whose children, Mark and Rachel, are enrolled. They underscore that the nursery "helps relieve the stresses on students and working spouses."

Publishing note

Millard Lind's review of Norbert Lohfink's, *Gewalt und Gewaltlosigkeit im Alten Testament* (Freiberg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 1983) will appear in the *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, University of Winnipeg.

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nite conferences and congregations in Pennsylvania February through May. On a service-teaching leave, he is being employed by the Inter-Conference Pastoral Training Board of Lancaster, Franconia and Atlantic Coast Conferences.

Erland Waltner and **June A. Yoder** gave a workshop on preaching Feb. 21-23 at Leamington, Ont. (postponed from January). Waltner will participate in the MHA convention at Denver March 1-5, and will give the commencement address at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg, April 27.

Campus calendar

March 21-22—Friendship Evangelism Workshop with Art McPhee. Contact Robert Ramseyer.

April 8-11—Congress on Urban Ministry, Chicago, offers continuing education for congregational and church leaders, educators, urban agency staff and anyone interested in the urban church. The theme of the fifth national Congress is "Spirituality and Social Justice: An Essential Relationship for Urban Ministry." AMBS student Sally Schreiner serves as Congress administrative assistant. For brochure and registration information, write: Congress on Urban Ministry, SCUPE, 30 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60610, or call (312) 944-2153. Early registration fee, postmarked by March 30, is $90; after that date the fee is $120.

April 10-14—AMBS choir tour to Ontario churches

April 24-25—Vincent Harding, professor at Iliff School of Theology, Denver, currently on sabbatical at Swathmore (Pa.) College, will give the annual Theological Lectureship at AMBS.

April 28-May 30—Ralph Lebold, president of Conrad Grebel College, theological center guest.

May 4—Vesper service led by the AMBS choir, 4 p.m.

May 11—Vesper service by Georges Aubert, organist, 4 p.m.

May 30—Orlando Costas, dean of Andover-Newton Theological School, Newton Center, Mass., will give the commencement address at graduation exercises to be held at Caanan Baptist Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Sawatzky heads field education

New faculty member Erick J. Sawatzky from Saskatoon assumed duties as director of field education Jan. 1. He will oversee an expanded role for internships in pastoral ministry, a move that grows out of recommendations made by the inter-Mennonite Theological Education Committee appointed by Mennonite Board of Education.

"Training for ministry involves more than skills development. I see field education as the prime setting in which to learn how to put people ahead of ideas and how to deepen awareness of what makes people and the church grow toward social, emotional and spiritual maturity."

AMBS and Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., are developing a three-year pilot project in which the three seminaries would annually place three students in yearlong pastoral internships.

For the past five years Sawatzky worked as executive director of the Saskatoon Pastoral Institute. He has held various professional posts, currently serving as a member of the Commission on Education (GC) and the National Board of Directors of the Canadian Association for Pastoral Education.

Sawatzky and his wife, Beverley (Boldt), are the parents of two children, Tyler (12) and Tamara (9).

Pastors welcome intense study

A January stretch at AMBS has become a tradition for General Conference pastors and spouses who participate in the Ministerial Leadership Services-sponsored study rotation. Participants enroll in one of the regularly scheduled three-week interterm courses and some stay on for the annual Pastors' Week.

While the course work for credit or audit is the primary reason for coming to campus, forums, chapels, spiritual life disciplines and group interaction in living together are also highly rated, says John Esau, director of Ministerial Leadership Services for the General Conference.

One pastor said the group's Wednesday evening meetings "were a good way to get everyone involved together." He added, "I especially enjoyed exposure to Canadian perspectives."

Another pastor said the rigors of in-depth study "left me in a state of shock for a couple of days," yet "slowly the discipline of intense study came back." He added, "The course ["War and Peace in the Bible"] has been a fabulous experience of tracing the theme of war and peace from Genesis to Revelation. It has also given me an opportunity to work at a study project which will directly affect our next ministry assignment (flags in the church)."

A spouse said, "My experience with 'Gospel of John' by Gertrude Roten was very good. Her emphasis on class participation and the interaction of the 24 students added a great deal to learning. She, however, as a personality giving herself openly and fully to the task at hand, will be a motivating factor beyond all the words said."

Sixteen pastors and spouses participated this year. Six came from Canada and one from Taiwan. Three pastors were women: Katherine Lue, Mary Beth Steuben and Helen Quintela. Katherine Lue and her husband, Harold, are spending a year in the United States so Harold can take further training in hospital administration. Mary Beth, an AMBS graduate, is in her first year of pastoring Spokane (Wash.) Mennonite Fellowship. Helen, a student at United Theological Seminaries, St. Paul, Minn., was licensed and installed in early February as pastor of a new Mennonite congregation in St. Paul.

Costs for the study rotation are pooled in a fund to which each participant gives $125, with a matching amount each from the congregation and conference. Women in Mission contribute to support spouses, and other support comes from the GC Ministerial Leadership Support budget. Mennonite Biblical Seminary, the GC partner in AMBS, provides full tuition grants. *John Bender*

Participants in the 1986 Pastor/Spouse Study Rotation included (front, from left) Harold, (behind) Jessica and Katherine Lue, Taiwan Mennonite Church; Frank and Helen Klassen, Elim Mennonite Church, Grunthal, Man.; Peter Lin, Houston (Texas) Chinese Mennonite Church; John A. Esau, Ministerial Leadership Services of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.; (second row, second person) Mary Beth Stueben, Spokane (Wash.) Mennonite Fellowship; Lola and Leo Miller, Meadows (Ill.) Mennonite Church; Sally and (behind) David Block, Congerville (Ill.) Mennonite Church; (third and top row) John Heyerly, Houston (Texas) Mennonite Church; Susan and (top) Frank Isaac, Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; Marlin Kym, Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church; Stephen, Sue and David Neufeld, North Battleford (Sask.) Mennonite Church. Not shown: Helen Quintella, St. Paul (Minn.) Mennonite Fellowship.

Underground nuclear weapons testing has increased one-third under the Reagan administration, and as many as 19 of these tests were not publicly announced, a report by the Natural Resources Defense Council, a non-profit research group, revealed in January. The NRDC report, based on seismic data and research by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, offers the first documentation of U.S. testing since the Reagan administration began conducting secret weapons tests in 1982. The administration has said that between 1980 and 1984 it conducted 82 underground weapons tests.

The Nov. 27, 1985, edition of the *Buffalo* (N.Y.) *News* gave an account of a man who "will spend up to a year in jail for criminally negligent homicide in the deaths of five Cape Vincent teenagers killed July 25, 1984, when his car struck them on the side of a road." Two pages later in that same newspaper appeared a report about a man ordered by an Erie County judge "to serve a prison term of 18 months to 4½ years for stealing about 10 pounds of chicken wings worth $5 from his neighbor's freezer."

Only 60 percent of U.S. workers who lost their jobs because of plant closings or relocations from 1979 to 1984 found new jobs during that time, a congressional study released Feb. 6 reported. The study faulted the lack of government job retraining efforts for the low employment statistics and indicated that the problem of displaced industrial workers is more serious than the government has previously estimated.

MCC U.S. passes resolutions about farm crisis, minorities

Denver (Meetinghouse)—With a largely urban service program, it was appropriate that the MCC U.S. annual meeting occur in Denver's Inner City Parish, an ecumenical urban ministry project supported by Denver Mennonites. While staff and board deliberated inside, minority high school students met in a special class for dropouts upstairs, and old men pushed shopping carts down the street, picking up pop bottles and beer cans.

The scene was low-income urban, but the plight of farmers was never far from board members' minds. The board passed a proposal from the MCC U.S. farm task force that asked MCC U.S. to take leadership in developing a position for a resource person who will work on the U.S. farm crisis. Funding will be provided by Mennonite Mutual Aid, MCC and Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

Focus of the position will be to assist farmers and farm community people who have or will lose the right to farm and/or employment because of the farm crisis. Emphasis will be on job retraining and relocation.

MCC U.S. executive secretary Wilmer Heisey, asked whether efforts will also be made to assist urban residents facing loss of businesses or employment, responded that "the urban implications of this discussion about the farm have been there since the beginning." He indicated that the farm crisis is the "catalyst" for the MCC U.S. response to economic difficulties. "It will be interesting to see where this has gone in 10 years," he added.

Board member Juan Martinez, a pastor in California's San Joaquin Valley, reminded the board to remember the plight of farm workers, many of whom are from minority groups. "A farmer may lose his land," he said, "but before that he fires his workers."

The board did have occasion to express its desire to be mindful of minorities when it passed a resolution advocating closer contact with members of the Hispanic Mennonite community. The need for the resolution followed a breakdown in communication between MCC U.S. and Hispanic leaders over the proposed move of the Refugee and Immigration Office from Washington to Akron, Pa. MCC U.S. was asked by Hispanic leaders to reconsider the decision, which was made in an effort to streamline administration costs. MCC U.S. staff will have further discussions with Hispanic representatives and report to the April executive committee meeting.

The board approved a resolution that MCC U.S. consult the Hispanic community "when a major policy issue" that affects that community comes before the board, that MCC U.S. staff strengthen contacts with the Hispanic community and that the Hispanic community initiate closer contacts with MCC U.S.

The resolution also has implications for other minorities, the board agreed.

In a reflection on the one-day meeting, Norman Shenk of the Lancaster Conference thanked staff for good reporting but wondered whether the format could be changed to facilitate more board participation. "Should we not be dealing with difficult and controversial issues?" he asked. "Is this the forum where we can address structural issues?" Later he said that the board needs "time to respond, not just to absorb."

Issues raised by board members included MCC U.S. policy on Sanctuary, a concern about the commercialization of SELFHELP, civil disobedience and the role of MCC U.S. Peace Section. There was not enough time to pursue the issues and concerns.

The board passed a 1986 budget of $3,117,400, a 15 percent increase over last year. Budgetary tensions noted by staff are the costs of placing a family in a VS unit and the hard choices between placing a volunteer in an income-generating activity or a service activity that MCC U.S. must support. This tension is compounded by the fact that the agencies which most need volunteers frequently cannot afford volunteers. *John Longhurst*

MCC in 1984, they paid an estimated $159 million in military taxes. Approximately $880,000 was paid during the course of the two-day meeting.

Martin touched on another issue that occupied the board when he said that "we have listened to representatives from our North American conferences. Have we also listened to our Christian brothers and sisters (around the world)?"

Earlier in the meeting Eugene Seals of the Mennonite Church asked if MCC had a "clear policy about evangelism . . . or do we have 900 different interpretations?" Executive secretary John Lapp quickly defended volunteers, saying that all are "active evangelists." Others wondered if appropriate methods of "verbal witness" were being taught in orientation, and one asked if volunteers had a "clear understanding of faith."

In response to the queries, Phil Rich, who recently visited MCC volunteers in Central America, said that "we may want to know if they are overtly Christian, but they want to know what we are about. Are we willing to listen to what they have to teach us about sharing the faith? Volunteers are trying to speak to us. I have a feeling that we are not willing to listen." *John Longhurst*

A 64-page supplementary hymnbook, targeted for publication this year, has been reviewed by the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan. Hymns translated from *The Mennonite Hymnal* include "Praise God from Whom," number 606. It will also include indigenous Taiwanese music.

As a result of the increasing use of paper products in Bangladesh and the potential for recycling this paper, Mennonite Central Committee Job Creation staff there are developing a paper-making project. This project is located at Feni, a town where unemployment is especially high. MCC workers are making plans to help build a small factory there to produce paper from old scrap paper. David Anderson, MCC Job Creation administrator in Dhaka, envisions a plant that will employ 118 poor people, many of them women.

Peter Hall, Anglican Bishop of Woolwich, told the third national gathering of Evangelical Peacemakers Nov. 9, 1985, that evangelicals must work harder at witnessing for peace in the larger society. Among the 250 participants were Anglican priests, Baptist preachers, Pentecostals, Quakers, Hutterian Brethren and Mennonites. Evangelical Peacemakers is a network of Christians strongly opposed to the nuclear arms race. Members believe their efforts to bring about peace must be based on prayer, a commitment to Jesus and worship with other Christians.

FOMCIT becomes equal partner in hospital operation

Taipei, Taiwan—The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT) met for its 28th annual conference Jan. 26-28 at the Wesley retreat grounds in the mountains just north of Taipei. Forty-one delegates from 16 churches registered, with about a dozen observers and visitors also attending.

A resolution making FOMCIT an equal partner in the operation of the Mennonite Christian Hospital was the major decision of the conference. For several years both the General Conference Mennonite Mission and FOMCIT have elected members to the board of directors, but only the mission held the right of veto over board decisions. Two years ago the mission took action inviting FOMCIT to become an equal partner.

In related action the conference body approved the proposal of the FOMCIT executive committee and the mission to register the hospital as a separate legal entity. Until now the hospital has been registered under the legal name of FOMCIT, which is under the Ministry of Interior. The new registration will bring the hospital under the National Health Bureau. This move conforms to new government regulations.

In a brief ceremony Simon Wung, pastor of the Hsi-tun Church, Taichung, was given a plaque in recognition of his 20 years of pastoral leadership in the conference. Wung has pastored the Hsi-tun Church since his graduation from seminary in 1965. Present membership is 101 active members—the largest in the conference. In recent years he has organized and developed small groups in the congregation and has also been involved in the Evangelism Explosion program in Taiwan.

In addition to the business sessions, reports were given by the various committees and churches. Fourteen churches reported slight membership increases during the year. Present membership stands at 1,164, with 858 listed as active members. Financially, 12 churches reported some increase in giving.

Lin-Sen Road Church in Taichung, the first organized Mennonite church in Taiwan, celebrated its 30th anniversary in March. Two churches, Sung-chiang Church and Te-un (Grace) Church in Taipei, moved into new facilities, which were purchased with the aid of CES loans from the General Conference.

A goal to increase membership to 2,500 by the year 2000 was accepted. The delegates also agreed to decrease on a yearly basis the subsidy asking from the Commission on Overseas Mission. For 1985 FOMCIT received $25,250, which was used for the support of churches, social concerns projects, seminary student education, retreats and publications. For 1986 FOMCIT will assume responsibility for seminary students.

Delegates also discussed pastoral leadership training and considered ways to encourage young people to prepare for Christian ministry. There was also considerable discussion of how to strengthen the churches. Some of these issues will be discussed with John Sommer, COM secretary for Asia, when he visits Taiwan in May. *Verney Unruh*

Delegates to the 1986 FOMCIT annual conference listen to chairman's report.

Principal needed

The executive committee of **Freeman Academy**, an inter-Mennonite junior-senior high school in Freeman, S.D., is seeking applicants for the position of principal. This position, including responsibilities as chief executive officer, opens **July** 1.

For further details contact:
LaVerne Graber
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Route 2
Box 187
Freeman, SD 57029
(605) 925-7782.

Job opening

Lakewood Retreat Center has a full-time head cook/food service position open. Lakewood is a Christian retreat and camp conference center owned and operated as an arm of the Mennonite Church. Lakewood is located half way between Brooksville and Dade City, Fla.

For more information, call or write:
Lakewood Retreat Center
c/o Terry Burkhalter
25458 Dan Brown Hill Road
Brooksville, FL 33512
(904) 796-4097.

Help needed

Swift Current Bible Institute is now receiving applications for the following positions:
principal, beginning in June,
administrative assistant, beginning in May,
teachers, beginning in September.

Please send all applications and inquiries to:
SCBI
Attention: Personnel Committee
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

Menno Simons Center in Witmarsum, Netherlands, in cooperation with the Frisian Mennonite Conference and the board of the Mennonite Church in Witmarsum, where Menno Simons was born, plan to commemorate 450 years since Menno Simons left the Roman Catholic Church and joined the Anabaptists. The celebration, scheduled for May 25, will include the play "Strength in Weakness." The center is asking for photos related to anything named after Friesland, Witmarsum, Menno or Menno Simons. These are for an exposition. Send to Mrs. C. J. Tjallingii, Wederik 35, 8446 AA Heerenveen, Netherlands, by April 1.

Kansas Mennonite Renewal Service will hold its seventh annual renewal celebration at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Church March 21-22. The theme is "Reflecting God's Glory," and the main speaker is Gerald Derstine, a teacher, evangelist, conference speaker and author. Seminars will include "Baptism in the Holy Spirit," "Worship," "Deliverance," "Inner Healing" and "Fivefold Ministry." Registration fee is $5 per person up to $15 per family. For more information contact Barb Callahan, 5430 NE Shaffer Road, Topeka, KS 66617, (913) 288-0727.

"In the Dark Valley, Who Cares?" will be the theme of Robert Carlson's message to the guests of the Mennonite Collegiate Institute's three fund-raising banquets March 20-22. Music will be provided by Bob and Verna Wiebe and Tim and Marlene Wiebe. Carlson, director of Prairie View Mental Health Center in Wichita, Kan., will deal with church and individual responses to people experiencing emotional stress. Tickets are $40, with $30 tax deductible. For information call (204) 327-5891.

Frank H. Epp: a tribute

More than almost anyone I have known, Frank Epp was a missionary—the very model of an evangelist most intrepid. He came to us so forthrightly in his editorials, in his books and in his lectures to tell our story and its meaning to those who had forgotten it or who, remembering their birthright, had failed to claim it.

But he went out also as an evangelist and reconciler to so many others—to the peoples of the Middle East and Vietnam, to students and to the refugees of the world, often by himself when we were slow to catch his vision.

He was a doer in a generation short on daring. He invested himself in bringing the world under the rule of Christ and changing it because that was God's work and his work too.

With amazing and consuming passion, he was the missionary, evangelist and miracle worker sent to us by God. *Maynard Shelly*

MCC BC executive director

Applications are invited for the position of executive director for MCC BC.
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- Salary commensurate with MCC policy

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Apply by Feb. 28 to:
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Box 2038
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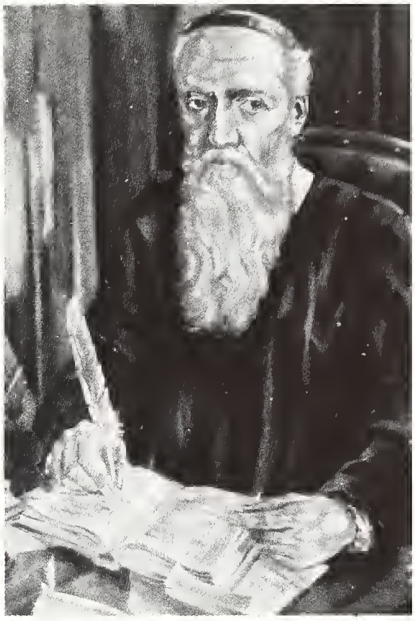
(604) 859-4141.



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Robert W. Regier of North Newton, Kan., is the recipient of a certificate of excellence for his illustrations in *The Sun and the Wind* (Faith and Life Press, 1983). Awarded by the National Association of Art Directors and Designers, the award recognizes the children's book, which is an Aesop fable retold by Cornelia Lehn. Regier is professor of art at Bethel College and former art director for the General Conference.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., is offering a spring Elderhostel session. From March 9-15 Bethel will offer three courses for those interested in an Elderhostel experience: "Good, Evil and Suffering: the Human Response," "Mennonites: Who Are They?" and "Wheat Weaving." Costs for residential students are $195 and include tuition, room and board. Commuter students may attend for $90. For more information contact Miller Stayrook, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117, (316) 283-2500.

"Why have we Brazilian Mennonites abandoned the peace position?" asks Peter Pauls, Jr., in a recent issue of *Bibel und Pflug*, a Brazilian Mennonite periodical. Pauls gives six reasons: (1) Guarantees for conscientious objectors by government officials were only oral; (2) Brazilian Mennonite churches never taught the peace principle; (3) the infiltration of Nazi militaristic ideology; (4) the fact that the little peace witness Brazilian Mennonites did give was neither convincing nor exemplary; (5) Brazilian Mennonites lacked courage and unity; (6) they still lack the unity to be heard by their government.

RECORD

Epp

Lohrenz

Woelk

Hooge

Loewen

Sprungers

deaths

Frank H. Epp, author, statesman, professor of history at Conrad Grebel College since 1971 and president of the college from 1973-1979, died Jan. 22 in the Kitchener-Waterloo (Ont.) Hospital of complications following heart surgery. He was 56. He is survived by his wife, Helen, three daughters and three grandsons.

Gerhard Lohrenz, teacher, preacher, Aeltester, archivist, writer, tour leaders and committee member, died suddenly on Feb. 6 at the age of 86. He is survived by his wife, Anna, one son and two daughters, nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

MINISTERS

Gary Badker, pastor at Beatrice (Neb.) Church, resigned effective May 31.

Timothy R. Detweiler was ordained to pastoral ministry Jan. 19 at Mountain Community Mennonite Church, Palmer Lake, Colo.

Roy Kaufman has resigned as pastor at Pulaski (Iowa) Church.

Burton Reed resigned his pastorate at Ebenezer Church, Bluffton, Ohio, Dec. 31, 1985. He began as pastor at Calvary Evangelical Church, Van Wert, Ohio, Jan. 1.

Edwin R. Stucky will terminate as pastor at First Church, McPherson, Kan., June 30.

workers

Marian Hooge, Rosthern (Sask.) Church, has begun a three-year Mennonite Central Committee term in Sorong, Indonesia. She will work as a physical therapist in Sele be Solu Hospital in association with the Swiss Mennonite Evangelization Committee. She received a bachelor's degree in physical therapy from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. Her parents are Katherine and Peter P. Hooge of Rosthern.

Peter Loewen, Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Man., has begun a four-month term of service with Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, Salunga, Pa., as a construction worker in Americus, Ga. His parents are Betty and Willie Loewen of Winkler.

Dana and *Kathleen Neff*, Manhattan (Kan.) Fellowship, have begun two-year MCC terms in Belle Glade, Fla., where they will work as community developers. Kathleen received a bachelor's degree in home economics from Kansas State University, Manhattan. Dana received a bachelor's degree in Bible and history from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. His mother is Arline Neff of Des Moines, Iowa. Her parents are Clifford and Elizabeth Bitikofer of Hesston, Kan.

Eula and *Orlando Sprunger*, First Church, Berne, Ind., have begun three-month MCC terms with SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa., where they will work in the receiving department.

Rick Woelk, Goessel (Kan.) Church, has begun a two-year MCC term in North Newton, Kan., where he will work as warehouse manager. His parents are Charles and Mary Ann Woelk of Goessel.

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Minister to young people in need. Openings include job trainer and developer, arts and crafts directors, sports and recreation leaders, shelter staff, etc.

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Summer service workers—
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WHEN we understand the actual plight of our contemporaries . . . share their suffering, THEN we shall be able to proclaim the Word of God. Jacques Ellul

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Not all voted

The pastor who was concerned about the 16 negative votes ("The Congregation Voted," Dec. 10, 1985, issue) should be more concerned about the two-thirds of the congregation who did not vote. *Name also withheld*

Jan. 13

More on fundamentalism

With much amusement I have followed the letters from perplexed readers of Peter J. Ediger's "I Am a Fundamentalist" (Aug. 27, 1985, issue). It is as if Lewis Carroll's Humpty Dumpty has just said, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean," and a score of Mennonite Alices have opened their mouths to protest. I do sympathize. Some of Peter's poetic meanderings are a bit too esoteric for me as well. But what makes me chuckle is how successfully he has stirred people up.

Peter loves to bend a word out of shape, twist it inside out and set it on its head. He can likewise let pigeon holes go stuff themselves. If your idea of "understanding" people is to find a box to put them in, you can give up when it comes to Peter. He's a theological square peg. He avoids serving up canned Christianity—you know the kind of faith I mean—that brand of theology that can be summed up in words with no defining actions attached. It can make him just plain difficult. But there is a certain method to his madness. I appreciate the English he puts on an idea. It makes me rethink what I've taken for granted.

Here's my advice: If you really want to know what Peter is saying, go watch what he does. His actions speak louder (and perhaps clearer) than his words. If his article provoked you to drag your most fundamental assumptions out of the closet for a good dusting, then it was well-written. If it perplexed you enough to wrestle with aggravating questions of faith, then it served its purpose. *Donna L. Williams, 10B Colonial Drive, New Paltz, NY 12561*

Jan. 21

The Second Coming

I am not aware of any clear doctrinal teaching about the Second Coming of Christ. Of course, the Apostolic Creed teaches the important high points. But from here on there is much, often controversial, speculative interpretation about this long-awaited event.

Are we to believe that the Lord will return—waging carnal warfare and setting up a kingdom much like we have them today?

Jesus said, "My kingdom is *not* of this world." We need instruction about how we should anticipate the nature of this kingdom when Christ returns.

Why make any effort to spread the good news of peace and goodwill through word and deed if the Second Coming is to be ushered in with carnal warfare? *Edna V. Schmidt, 304 S.E. 4th, Newton, KS 67114*

Jan. 21

Editor's note: I too have frequently been perplexed by the many strange statements about Jesus' Second Coming. I've also been disturbed that so few Mennonite writers have addressed this subject.

We are planning a "Foundations of our Faith" article on this topic sometime later this year. We hope to get some good dialogue on the subject. Thanks for writing.

Please send index

We read *The Mennonite* from cover to cover and often refer back to articles that have appeared.

We wish to take you up on your offer of an index for the 1985 issues. *Katherine and Art Jahnke, Box 31, Herbert, SK S0H 2A0*

Jan. 27

Editor's note: We gladly send a free index for 1985 to all who request it.

When babies don't come

Thanks to the author of this article (Jan. 14 issue) for sharing her personal thoughts on the issue of infertility and wanting a baby. I am a mother of two precious adopted daughters. My husband and I are not able to conceive a child. We have known this for about 10 years.

We were married almost six years when we adopted our first child. I endured the pain of many, many thoughtless comments made by people during that time. I not only had to grieve the loss of children I would never have, but I also had to face the many thoughtless questions and comments people had to make.

My heart still aches with emptiness and pain as I look at a pregnant woman. I imagine it always will. I have asked the Lord many times, "Why me?" But I also know the grief and the pain has brought me much closer to God than I ever imagined I could be. He gave me two beautiful daughters in miraculous ways as specific answers to prayer in my life. Without our infertility I would not have experienced this. The pain and grief I feel is only balanced by the joy and love we receive from our two precious adopted children. Being parents is a responsibility we cherish and wanted so much. We thank the Lord each day for our children.

It was so good to read the article and identify with someone who experiences what I have and still experience from time to time. Thank you for your insight to write this article and the sensitivity and honesty with which you shared your feelings. I pray that you will be able to conceive a child and that God will give us both the courage to cope with our situation. *Linda Ewert, 1517 Manchester, McPherson, KS 67560*

Jan. 29

Space prayer 1986

Seven soared in hope
with heads held high,
And none of us thought
they would die.

They were like us
both white and black,
male and female,
None held back.

We saw the human touches
too—
the apple, and the grief—
Both new.

And now our prayer
for all of space
"May only peace
be in that place." *Helen C. Coon, Box 66, Deer Creek, OK 74636*

Jan. 29

Good to be encouraged

It is reassuring to see the interest taken by *The Mennonite* in regard to the plight farmers face in the United States and Canada. It seems that the agricultural sector in the United States has been and continues to be harder hit than have Canadian farmers. Nevertheless the problem here is worsening steadily.

I am a third-generation farmer in Canada and my family farmed in Russia prior to coming here. My grandparents and my parents together built up farming operations from sheer poverty. To this day my father's health suffers due to the excessively hard work combined with the poor working conditions of those early times.

It was a long hard struggle for many of our Mennonite farmers who pushed themselves to the limit to build up farming operations that would eventually provide them with a decent living. My parents are thankful for the way God has blessed them.

Once my parents were established, they helped their family, the next generation, get started. Due to ever-increasing levels of mechanization, the smaller, relatively debt-free farming operations were no longer viable for young, beginning farmers with no assets to speak of. In our family more than one son wanted to farm, making it necessary for us to borrow money to buy both land and machinery. At that time farm products were worth at least twice as much as they are now, and expenses were considerably lower. The snowball effect that these conditions have produced has left many farmers, especially beginning farmers, in a precarious situation. So far our family is still fortunate enough to be able to meet payments and commitments, but there are many situations where this is not the case.

The stress of wondering just how long this can continue is at times overwhelming. It hurts to watch neighbors, fellow church members and friends attempting to fend off bankruptcy.

This is not to say that farmers are innocent of any blame for the situation they find themselves in.

It's good to encourage one another in tough times. *John Willms, Box 202, Coaldale, AB T0K 0L0*

Feb. 4

CPS addresses wanted

Looking for current addresses of former CPSers who served in Lapine, Ore., during World War II for projected reunion planning.

Please reply immediately to:
Wilbert Reimer
Box 112
North Newton, KS 67117.

Winnipeg, winter and MVS

Brenda Suderman

Winnipeg is known to many outsiders as "Winterpeg." The home of 30,000 Mennonites and 39 established Mennonite congregations. It is also the new home of the recently established Mennonite Voluntary Service unit, sponsored by Bethel Mennonite Church.

Bethel Mennonite Church spent two years in discussion and establishment of this unit. Its first members came in January 1985.

Bethel Church wanted to be involved in more direct and concrete service to the community. They saw the establishment of a Mennonite Voluntary Service unit as one way of accomplishing this goal. "An MVS unit was seen as an extension of our church," says Werner Wiens, who was involved in the initial planning. This extension of Bethel could help bring the church's mission to needy areas of Winnipeg.

The unit was also envisioned to have a mission inside Bethel. The planning committee hopes that the presence of full-time volunteers in the midst of the more than 500 members and friends of Bethel will inspire and motivate individuals and groups within the congregation to consider various volunteer and service options for themselves.

Now a year old, the unit has hosted up to 50 people from the congregation at several fellowship events and has given presentations about MVS to some of the church's groups. Two of the unit members have taught Sunday school; another has led an adult education class.

The unit members share freely of their experiences as individuals and as an intentional community in Winnipeg. Although they come from various perspectives and backgrounds, they jokingly agree on at least one subject: Winnipeg winters are cold. Three of the four speak from experience. Kelly Schmucker, a native of Stryker, Ohio, has already experienced two Winnipeg winters as a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer in their head offices, and she has committed herself to two more winters in Winnipeg with MVS. Doris Mehl, Lake Oswegio, Ore., and Catherine Adams, San Antonio, Texas, are the veterans of the unit, having arrived in January 1985. Paul Eastwood has yet to experience an entire Winnipeg winter, having arrived in early summer from southern Ontario.

They agree that coping with winter is tough, but living as an intentional community is tougher. Paul, who experienced community living while a student in Toronto, claims that he had no illusions about unit life. "When I came here I knew there would be conflicts and problems and differences. When you're put with people you don't choose to live with, you expect some problems. But I would do it again—there are more positive things than negative." Catherine admits she had illusions. "I'm still going through the process of having my illusions shattered. I knew what to expect with my job as a social worker, but unit life is completely new to me." Doris agrees and presents another perspective, that of leaving a lifetime of friends plus her children and grandchildren. "I think unit life is great because it challenges you, especially someone my age, living in a new and strange place with a bunch of strangers."

Although all of them are nearer the beginning of their two-year assignments than the end, they share what impact a service assignment has had on them and will have. Kelly, who has already completed a two-year term with MCC, talks of not being able to go back home again. Yet, she admits, her term with MCC has helped her home church understand what it means to do missions. "I talked to my church about what was going on here with Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council. They were interested and their eyes were opened."

The four members of the Winnipeg MVS unit agree that there is a need for the unit to exist in Winnipeg, in spite of the many Mennonites and churches already in the city. They also agree that living as a household of volunteers and attempting to live a lifestyle of simplicity in terms of money, possessions and activities includes living in the inner city. Living at 74 Langside Street in Winnipeg's core area helps them identify with the people and the issues they deal with in their daily assignments. Kelly and Catherine work with new Canadians, many of whom live in the same neighborhood, at the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council. Doris is involved with the Family Centre, a drop-in center sponsored by several Mennonite churches for inner-city families. Paul is a staff person for Project Peacemakers, an interchurch organization.

For Kelly, Paul, Catherine and Doris, living in inner-city Winnipeg and coping with winters and MVS are challenges they are willing to face. (In January a fifth person joined the Winnipeg MVS unit. Kathy Grant of Sault Sainte Marie, Ont., is working at Carter Day Care Centre. She was not yet there when this story was done and the photograph was taken.)

Brenda Suderman, 7-671 McMillan Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3M 0S6, works as news editor for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Left to right: Kelly Schmucker, Doris Mehl, Catherine Adams and Paul Eastwood of the Winnipeg MVS unit at their Langside Street residence

Their faith speaks in Nicaragua, El Salvador

Myron D. Schrag

Last June 12-27 I visited Central America as part of the Augsburg College Center for Global Services and Education in Minneapolis.

In Central America I saw the faith of a people who suffered in ways you and I can scarcely imagine, a people who know the meaning of faith in ways that I have yet to learn, a people whose hope and determination will not be destroyed by bombs and guns. They have something infinitely more powerful. In Central America are people of faith who have nothing—yet everything. There are people here in North America who have everything—yet nothing.

Gabriel Gaitan is director of development for CEPAD, a Protestant relief organization in Nicaragua. MCC works under CEPAD. When asked how CEPAD works with the current government of Nicaragua, he said, "We have all the freedom we want in order to work here. We can point out the errors of the Sandinista. Sometimes we are against the direction they are taking. We work on our disagreements together. We are all Nicaraguans."

In the war zone of Estelí in northern Nicaragua we met with some "campesinos" on a cooperative farm. This particular cooperative had not been attacked by contras, but a neighboring cooperative had. They told how the contras had burned crops, destroyed a health clinic and school and killed the doctors and teachers. "We are Christians," they said. "Why does Reagan send money to kill our people? They won't let us live in peace."

A church in a poor "barrio" (neighborhood) of Managua had its walls and ceiling covered with colorful murals depicting the history and life of the people of Nicaragua. One mural in particular caught my eye. It was a picture of a campesino carrying a cross. It was a vivid reminder to me that Christ is present with the poor. They identify with him and he with them. Matthew 25 came to mind: "I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me."

The priest's homily in that little church was based on the story of the disciples in a boat on the Sea of Galilee during a storm. "Nicaragua," said the priest, "is a boat in a storm, but Jesus is present. The final word is not death but love."

These Salvadoran women weep for townspeople killed in an army attack.

In El Salvador is an organization called the Mothers of the Disappeared. These are mothers whose sons have disappeared due to the actions of the death squads. Some have had their sons tortured and their mutilated bodies returned to them.

But Mothers of the Disappeared not only mourned over the loss of their own sons. They also said, "We denounce atrocities and the things the army is doing to our sons who are also soldiers ordered and trained to commit atrocities. They are also Salvadorans." And I thought of the words of Jesus: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." These women embodied that kind of forgiveness.

Pastor Gomez, a Lutheran, is heavily involved in work among the poor and refugees in El Salvador. "The situation is desperate," he said. "The war is killing the best of our children. The climate is full of terror. We now understand better the hymn 'A Mighty Fortress is our God.' The cross now means something new. Christ told his people, when he commissioned them, not to tell anyone. 'Why don't you want us to tell?' they must have asked. In our setting that command of Christ makes sense. We do good acts, but we have to tell people not to tell anybody else because the enemy never has an understanding of what God wants. We also understand better the Beatitude 'Blessed are those persecuted for righteousness sake.' People persecute you for what God wants. We feel an internal peace in our work. The church has grown. We don't have angels but people. We have sinners and we try to help them. People come with a desire to listen and find God. We have had difficult moments. I was accused of subversion. I was afraid. When I left jail and went to church that first Sunday I thought all the people would stay away because they would be afraid of being associated with me. But the church was full. And the church grew after that. My faith has increased. We have more and more problems—but also more and more blessings from Jesus."

Then Pastor Gomez shared how his own faith has grown in working with refugees. "No one gives without also receiving. We have learned spiritually from them. We have learned human virtues, how faith works for them. I know mothers who have lost all their children in the war, also their homes, crops and animals. They have been left without clothes and identification papers. Yet there in the church service they thank God."

We drove through the beautiful countryside of El Salvador to the airport, past the side road where the four U.S. church women had been murdered. I thought, How ironic that the name of this country, so violent, so oppressive, yet with so much natural beauty, means "the Savior."

Myron D. Schrag is the pastor of Faith Mennonite Church, 2801 East 22nd St., Minneapolis, MN 55406.

books

Mennonites in America

Land, Piety, Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America 1683-1790 *by Richard K. MacMaster (Herald Press, 1985, 343 pages)*

Reviewed by Keith L. Sprunger, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117

"The Mennonite Experience in America" (1683 to the present) is a cooperative project of historians from many Mennonite groups. The author of this first volume is Richard K. MacMaster from Bridgewater, Va. The further volumes are being prepared by Theron F. Schlabach, James C. Juhnke and Paul Toews. As the first published volume promises, this Mennonite history will be not only extensive but scholarly, interesting and significant in its interpretations.

Land, Piety, Peoplehood sets forth American Mennonite history for the period 1683 to 1790, beginning with the Germantown settlement of 1683. This book is not the history of individual Mennonite congregations or Mennonite preachers but the story of a church (or a people) as a whole. The three main themes highlighted in the title are used to organize and interpret two centuries of history. After an opening chapter which sketches the backgrounds of European Mennonite history and the first settlements in America, the author launches into an extensive treatment on land and settlement patterns, based upon land records and wills, sources dear to professional historians. MacMaster draws insights from historical geography and the "new social history" methods currently in vogue but previously not often applied to Mennonite history. The result is a deeper knowledge of Mennonite history on the economic and social levels.

Obviously, not every episode of Mennonite history can be presented as religiously heroic. The Mennonite motives for immigration and settlement, for example, according to MacMaster, were similar to those of most other immigrants, a mixture of "speculative, capitalistic motive, and the more family-and-tribal-oriented one" (p. 137). The author looks for idealistic actions true to the Anabaptist heritage but does not force such interpretations. Failures and dilemmas receive their place.

The middle section searches for the religious faith of Mennonites against the interplay of "Pietism" and "Anabaptism," and the final section explores the political issues of the Indian wars and the American Revolution. Interspersed among the larger themes is information about Mennonite education, publishing, architecture, preaching and related topics.

Again and again the author raises the question of how Mennonites related to the larger American scene. Have they been "typically American or different"? The book ends with Mennonites confronting the American Revolution and the new nationhood, just as Dutch Mennonites at the same time were facing the European revolutions. Connections between American Mennonite history and world history could receive more attention.

1 Corinthians 1-7

Have the Mind of Christ *by Marilyn Peters Kliewer (Faith and Life Press, 1985, 90 pages)*

Reviewed by David Sprunger, 716 E. 10th, Newton, KS 67114

Have the Mind of Christ is a nine-session study guide to 1 Corinthians 1-7 by Marilyn Peters Kliewer, Bible instructor at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute. Her manual guides the reader through a close textual study of Paul's letter dealing with factions, immorality and issues of marriage and divorce in the Corinthian church, and it brings the reader to see the passage in its historical context and to see its modern relevance to congregational and personal life.

Kliewer brings the reader to a greater understanding of the early church in Corinth, the historical background of the problems it faced and the strategy Paul used to deal with these issues.

In addition to stressing the importance of 1 Corinthians 1-7 to the history of the early church, Kliewer helps each reader apply the lessons of each passage to contemporary church life. For example, questions ask readers to compare their congregations to the one at Corinth, to wonder if Paul would be shocked by anything in their churches and to consider the images their churches show to people outside the congregation.

On a third level, *Have the Mind of Christ* uses readers' study of the passage to force some critical self-examination. For example, readers are asked how they would address a letter dealing with such issues to their congregations, whether their behavior is modified in the presence of certain people and how they feel about marriage and singlehood.

Have the Mind of Christ is the second volume in the Faith and Life Bible Studies series, and it meets the series' goal of being usable with groups who have no formal training in Bible study. The workbook format makes it an excellent text for either self-directed or group study.

Children and divorce

The Boys and Girls Book About Divorce *by Richard A. Gardner, M.D. (Bantam, 1970, 155 pages)*

Reviewed by Anne Neufeld Rupp, Box 8, Goessel, KS 67053

Richard Gardner, a child psychiatrist, writes this book for children whose parents are in the process of divorce or have divorced. Gardner believes in the strength and integrity of children and helps them identify the feelings and fears they may be facing and what to do about these feelings in the continued parent-child relationship. He deals with issues such as sadness, blame (children frequently feel the divorce is their fault), anger and its appropriate use, fear of being abandoned, getting along with a divorced parent, shame, additional family responsibilities and attitudes of other children.

Gardner helps the child work through these feelings not as a victim but as one who even at an early age can look at options for handling a problem.

A child of nine or older may easily read the book alone. However, in his forward to parents Gardner indicates that it is wise for parents to read it with their children, to open opportunity for discussion. It is also suggested that parents read it and glean helpful and appropriate ways of relating to their children during or after divorce.

The increasing divorce rate throughout the nation and in our Mennonite circles challenges us to be aware of rather than negate the needs of families who divorce. Too often the children are ignored. Gardner's book is a corrective for that.

MEDITATION

Mrs. Sarah . . .

Mrs. Sarah
smells
she's dirty
yellow oozing sores
stain her face
hands
legs
3 bags (one from
Saks Fifth Avenue)
paper
used
100 times already
1 shopping cart (rusted)
holds everything
she has
almost nothing
greasy hair
the hair that's there
at least
Mrs. Sarah
smells
she's dirty
she's awake
up from bed
concrete

Jerry ________;
(clean
innocent
ignorant
awkward
appalled
unaware
uniformed
motivated
scared
clumsy but present)
"Good morning,
Mrs. Sarah!
How did you sleep
last night?
. . . did you sleep
last night?
. . . where did you sleep?
. . . could you?

How. . . ?"

evangelism

Chuck Neufeld

CONTENTS

The Christian church from early on has been a center for worship and for charitable ministries. There has been a concern to serve the total person, to save people's souls and help them become fulfilled in every way.

Such a commitment to total-person missions demands the active involvement of the whole body of Christ. We need professional workers to lead, train and coordinate. But we all need to see ourselves as partners in the global witness. Central to realizing this vision is the idea of voluntary service. It is not an option as a favor to someone else. It is a mandate for our own spiritual health.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Why should I consider MVS?

Voluntary service is for young people undecided about their career or education—right? VS is for the unemployed—right? Once I retire, I should give some years to MVS—right?

Right and wrong. It can be appropriate for young adults to serve as volunteers as part of their search for direction. VS can be an interim "job." It is good when retired people consider MVS.

But there's more to volunteering and VS than the above. All people are created in the image of God. And one of the basic human needs is to find wholeness with our Creator. But for that salvation to fulfill our lives, we need to have a part in God's ongoing creative ministry. The First Commandment (Mark 12:28-30) and the Great Commission (Matthew 18:19-20) were never given to be burdensome. They are outlets and resources for our basic spiritual needs.

The call and commitment to mission, for all believers, is much more than "just giving a few hours of your time" here and there. It is part of the total Christian community's commitment to "do justice . . . to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8b). The body of Christ has long taken this calling as integral to our welfare and to our integrity. Philanthropy and volunteerism today are not unique to Christianity. But there is historical evidence that the global compassion of the Early Church, with its concern for the total person, was a revolutionary commitment with deep roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Often we have been overwhelmed by the world's needs. This has led the church to build institutions—school, homes, hospitals—as resources for coping. That has been blessing *and* bane. While institutions enable us to care for the masses, they tend to put our caring/service into the hands of professionals. And this tends to make mission less personal—for the professionals, for those who receive the care and for the rest (frequently leaving them only with the bills to pay).

In today's high-tech world we see the limitations of institutions. People need high-touch more than high-tech. Mission is people to people. Technology at best can be a supplement, never a substitute—again, both for the care givers and the care receivers.

It is tempting in today's world of specialists for many believers to feel inadequate or to be too preoccupied with themselves. Such people miss a significant dimension that God wants to add to your spirituality.

Others fail to recognize and receive the deeper values of voluntary service. It is much more than doing someone else a favor. In voluntarily serving other people, you and I serve God and ourselves (Matthew 25:31-46).

Why then do churches find volunteers hard to get? Why is MVS short of workers?

To be in mission is to become a burning fire—with the flames of Pentecost. But the enabling Spirit came to the apostles in their weakest hour—their ambitions and dreams had been shattered by Calvary. In their helplessness God came to them.

For you and me to volunteer—for MVS in urban areas, teaching Sunday school—is not easy. At first these people feel like intruders threatening to rob us of what we consider our own—time, money, energy. And our "success orientation" says that they deserve their lot. We're glad not to be like them. Are we really much different from the self-righteous Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14)?

But our ultimate inner peace begins when we serve other people and they see beauty in us. When they affirm our being, regardless of status or wealth. They spy in us the image of God and help us discover it too.

The transformed life (Romans 12:1-2) helps us realize that today and tomorrow are not ours to hold. They are opportunities to exercise our calling to give life and love to one another. It happens as we accept that we too are needy and that in serving others we are served.

It grows as we discover beauty in the prisoner, the unruly child in class, the wrinkled and senile grandmother in the nursing home. As we, like a grain of wheat, die to self and live to others (John 12:24), our life multiplies.

Volunteer because of mission—to yourself and to others. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

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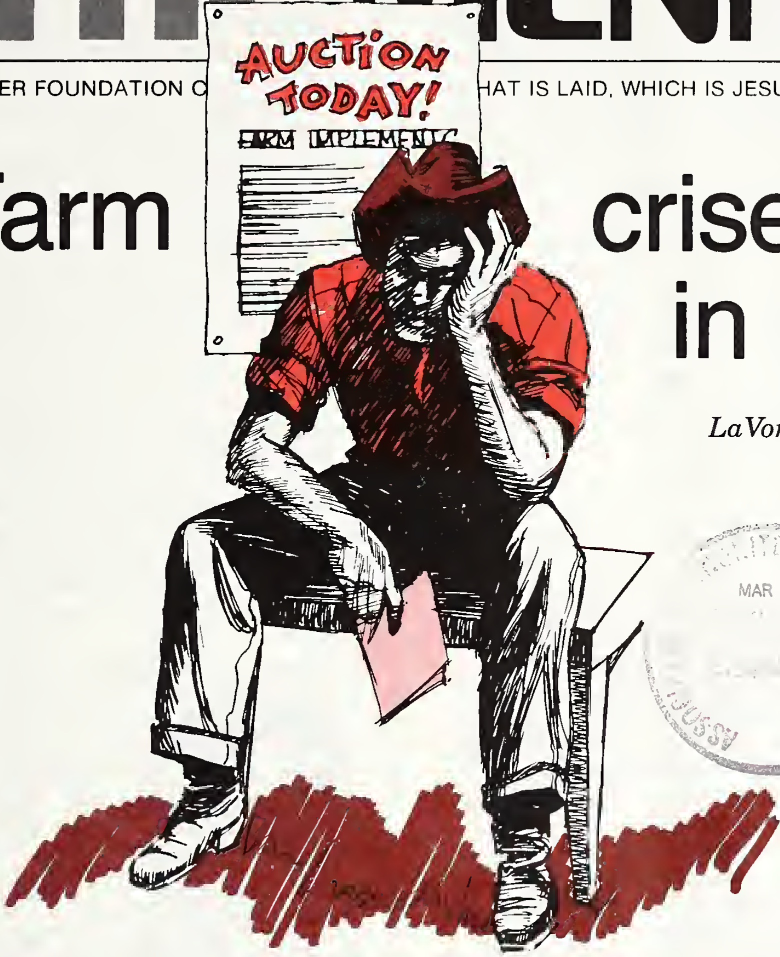


Farm crises are threads in a fabric

LaVonne Platt

MAR 14 '86
ASSOCIATED SEMINARIES

"We are very much intertwined. The farmer couldn't get along without these supportive businesses, this infrastructure. We're all tied together. They depend on us and we depend on them. I think we're all going to sink or swim together."

The speaker was Raymond Regier, a central Kansas grain farmer who for more than 30 years has worked the land his parents and grandparents farmed before him.

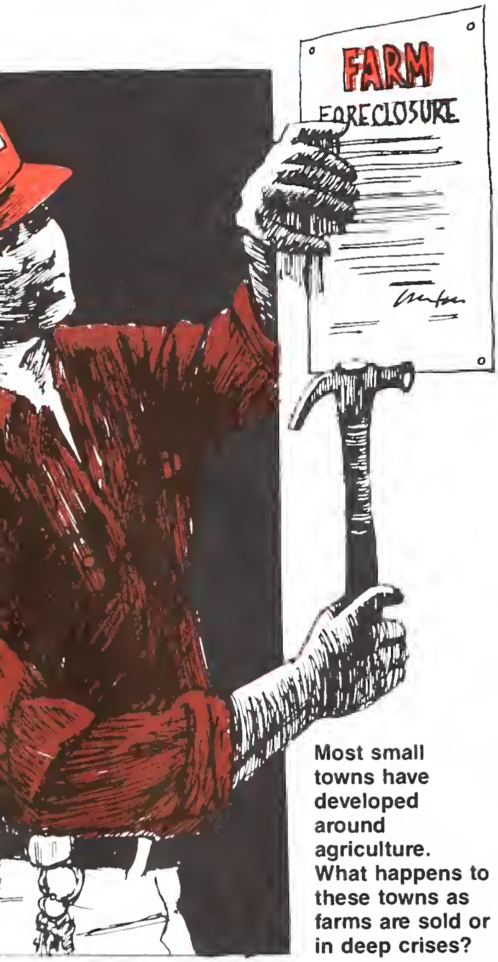
Regier was part of a small group of Mennonites from five congregations in three central Kansas counties who met last July to discuss the current farm situation from the perspectives of an implement dealer, a rural banker, a farm cooperative manager and both beginning and established farmers. As they spoke, a fabric of rural life began to take shape in my mind, and the threads that strengthened, weakened

and even broke that fabric became more defined.

Kenneth Goering, president of the Citizens State Bank of Moundridge and a member of the Eden Mennonite Church, agreed with Regier. "You wouldn't have a financial institution in this area without agriculture. The whole retail establishment is based on that farmer out there. When the farmer isn't having a good year, business really slows down."

Glen Unrau, a McPherson implement dealer, said that was certainly true with his business. "We rely 100 percent on the farm trade," he said. "How well the farmer does determines how well we do."

Unrau illustrated how current economic problems of farmers affect the agricultural infrastructure. "We get letters from farmers who have run out of credit (from their financial institutions). In trying to work things through, they write to their suppliers of chemicals, fertilizers, repairs, services, as well as implement dealers, and they simply have to say to them, 'You are maybe going to lose in this whole deal.' " Unrau went on, "We may have extended credit of $8,000 to $10,000, and all of a sudden we are faced with whether we are going to recover that."



Most small towns have developed around agriculture. What happens to these towns as farms are sold or in deep crises?

The discussion turned to the increase of bankruptcies in the area. Marvin Esau, manager of the Farmers Grain Cooperative at Walton and a member of the Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, dealt with seven farmers who declared bankruptcy in 1984. "And it wouldn't surprise me to see that many in 1985," he said.

"I firmly believe there are few people who *want* to take bankruptcy," Goering said, "especially among farmers. Of the farmers I've seen go into it, I can't tell you one that wanted to."

Jim Graber, a young farmer who belongs to the Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, spoke with conviction. "For most farmers it's like losing a part of the family. They certainly don't want to."

One participant in the small group issued a call for the church to increase sensitivity to the needs of farmers in trouble. He said that in his church farmers who face economic problems have quit attending.

That is not the case, however, at the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church near Goessel, where Unrau chairs the congregation. "Of the membership that have declared bankruptcy or are in the process of making changes (to avoid losing their farms), they all come to church," Unrau said. "That's where they get their support. We couldn't bail them out financially—that is impossible. But at least we can let them know we empathize with their problems. We make it a special point to simply go to visit. That's a Christian obligation."

"Some of those people have tough decisions to make when they get into such positions," Esau said. "They're getting some advice that tells them to do the opposite of their thinking and of the way they were brought up. Some bankruptcy attorneys—and they have to use one someplace, I guess—tell them, 'You can go to your neighborhood co-op, go to your implement dealer, dump that bill, forget those people.' And yet those are the same people they go to church with and that their daily lives depend on. Then they have to make the decision, and I can see that to be an awful dilemma. I don't know how some of them can handle it," he said. "I really don't."

Graber, who has a business preparing income-tax returns in addition to farming, believes it is important for farmers to talk openly about their troubles. "I agonize over what I call Mennonite macho-ism," Graber said, and went on to explain. "There will be three farmers standing at a sale, saying, 'Well, this guy just wasn't a good manager. He did this and this wrong. But we aren't having any trouble. We're doing OK.' Then later that year I see their tax books come in, and they are in terrible trouble. There's such a stigma about admitting it. But I think the more it's talked about the more likely it will loosen up a little."

Regier, a member of the Hebron Mennonite Church near Buhler, did not think Mennonites were more reticent than the general population. "From what I hear, farmers anywhere are reluctant to talk about their personal financial problems," he said.

One reason for the economic crisis in farming is that the value of farm produce and land went down while everything the farmer bought continued to go up in price. Graber suggested that if farm income and land values had risen like costs of services and equipment, most farmers would be prosperous today. "That is a point we are overlooking," he said. "Devaluation of the land is not a product of poor management."

Esau agreed. "Whenever you buy anything, expecting its value to go up and instead it goes down, it will make you look bad, whether it was a tractor or investments. I don't think there is anyone in business today who can't look back and see where he or she made a mistake."

Goering responded from the perspective of a banker. "Because of a drop in land values, many loans that seemed proper at the time they were made now appear to have been based on poor advice," he said. He also said that some financial institutions made loans without checking the validity of the loan request because when land values were high there was plenty to back the loan.

Unrau pointed out that the banker and the farmer made their decisions together to use borrowed money for expansion. "And I know of financial institutions who have stayed right in there and taken their licks along with the farmers and tried to help them survive and realign," he said.

One part of the problem is that farmers need to continue to produce—even sometimes to increase production—in order to be able to pay interest they have coming due, while other businesses can control production to keep prices high for their goods.

However, cutting production can also cause difficulty. Unrau told how the consolidation of major implement dealers affected his business. When Case/Tenneco purchased International Harvester, it was a matter of survival of one or the other dealership in McPherson." Unrau's business was awarded the contract for the newly consolidated company, increasing its share of the market from 28 percent to 48 percent of the tractors in the county, but the other dealership in town closed.

The men repeatedly stressed the importance of communication between farmers and businesses with whom they interact. According to Goering, communication often breaks down when farmers are in financial difficulties. "When they can't make a loan or interest payment, they just don't show up," Goering said. "But you've got to keep communication open."

Esau agreed. "Whether it's the co-op, the bank or the implement dealer they're working with, farmers have to communicate. When it gets to the point that we've got to run them down, they get defensive—and that step shouldn't have to be taken.

"Looking at it from the side of the farmer, though," Esau continued, "they don't know what to tell you, so they hesitate to communicate. They don't have what they think you want to hear."

Graber and Regier both saw relationships between farm policy and U.S. defense policy. "We raised 2 billion bushels of wheat in the U.S. this year," Graber said, "and to buy it would cost $6 billion." He paused to let the enormity of the figure sink in, and then went on. "Reagan's Star Wars proposal alone is at least $500 billion, enough to buy all the wheat produced in the United States for the next 100 years. Put in that perspective, I think defense funds certainly pull away from farm funds. That has a large effect on what happens to us."

Regier expanded on the topic of defense. "Military expenditures are economic waste," he said. "We have an annual $200 billion deficit. Although the total budget affects the deficit, military spending is the prime villain. And the deficit is related to the value of the dollar, so military expenditures are a factor, particularly when you're talking about international trade."

During the discussion the farmers, banker, implement dealer and co-op manager wove together their perspectives on the farm situation to show a pattern of rural life shaped by interaction with the church and community, but it was a fabric affected by economic and political forces largely outside their control. At the end of more than an hour's discussion, Kenneth Goering tied together the comments of the group when he said, "It is discouraging in that we don't see an end to this. We see the agricultural situation becoming worse over the next few years. And the only hope is that usually when things look so bad, they're never quite as bad as they look. And something usually happens that pulls you out. Looking over the next two to four years, there is very little hope out there. We've made it this far, but where do we go from here?" *A Meetinghouse article* •

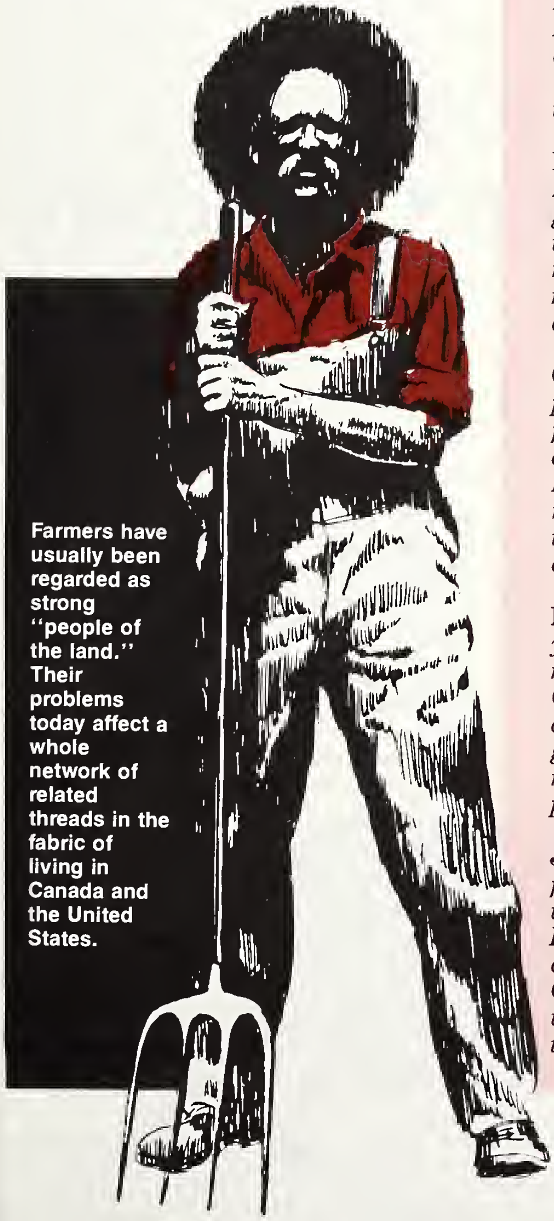
Raymond Regier *has spent all of his life on the 400-acre northwest Harvey County (Kan.) farm where he now grows wheat, corn and soybeans. Raymond and his wife, Gladys, are members of the Hebron Church at Buhler and are both active on Western District committees. Raymond has also served on the General Conference peace and justice reference council. The Regiers are members of the Kansas MCC Hunger Concerns Committee and the Kansas MCC Task Force on the Farm Crisis.*

Kenneth Goering *has been associated with the Citizens State Bank of Moundridge, Kan., for 18 years, the past eight years as president. He grew up in a farm family and still does some farming himself. Except for two years in 1-W service in Denver, Goering has lived in rural Moundridge all of his life. An active member of the Eden Church near Moundridge, Goering has taught Sunday school and served a term as church chairman.*

Glen Unrau *has been in the implement business at American Farm Supply in McPherson, Kan., since 1977, having previously taught school, farmed and traveled with a farm equipment company. Unrau grew up on a farm near Goessel, a few miles from the farm where he and his wife, Mary Lou, have lived since their marriage. The Unraus' three sons now manage the farm. Active in the Alexanderwohl Church, Glen Unrau has taught Sunday school and is presently congregational chairman. He is also active with the Western District Mennonite Men's organization.*

Marvin Esau *has been in the grain elevator business for 30 years, 26 years as manager of the Farmers Grain Cooperative. Recently he was recognized for 30 years of service as a volunteer fireman. Marvin's wife, Gladys, has worked in the Walton (Kan.) Co-op office for 20 years. She also helps at the Newton Community Play School. The Esaus have four grown children, all living with their families in Harvey County. For nearly 30 years Gladys has worked in the preschool Christian education program of the Bethel College Mennonite Church.*

Jim Graber *grew up on the farm near Hesston, Kan., where his father farmed until he took over in 1979. Graber pastures 800 sheep and raises wheat, corn and hay on his 450-acre farm. He is vice president of the Kansas Sheep Association. In 1984 he was named Kansas Lamb Producer of the Year. A member of the Kansas MCC Task Force on the Farm Crisis, Graber's perspectives on current rural issues are broadened by his work as an income-tax consultant. Ruby and Jim Graber are members of the Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston.*



Farmers have usually been regarded as strong "people of the land." Their problems today affect a whole network of related threads in the fabric of living in Canada and the United States.

A reporter looks at the U.S. and Canadian farm crisis

Jim Romahn

". . . the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants. Throughout the country that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land" (Leviticus 25:23, 24).

About 10 percent of the farmers in Canada and the United States have been bankrupted in the past seven years. Another 15 to 20 percent are in dire financial straits, unlikely to survive without some form of government assistance. It is the worst farming depression since the 1930s, and it pervades both sides of the Canadian-U.S. border.

Canadian farmers are shielded by the fact that the U.S. dollar has appreciated in value and by stringent import controls on poultry and dairy products. U.S. farmers, on the other hand, are offered more direct assistance from the federal treasury. Yet, on balance, statistics indicate the failure rate is running about equal.

Aside from the obvious differences of climate and soils, the biggest difference between farming in the United States and Canada is government policies. Although they differ, they are surprisingly similar in their objectives.

Both nations have an abundance of resources for farming, including prime farm land; water; skilled people willing to make huge sacrifices to be farmers; money and technology. Given this abundance of resources, whenever there is the faintest glimmer of profitability in agriculture, the desire of thousands of people to become farmers (or to become farmers on a larger scale), immediately expresses itself in the form of additional investments and production.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Faced with this challenge of abundance and resulting marginal returns, politicians have tried to help farmers. In the United States the main approach has been to improve farm incomes by paying direct subsidies, deficiency payments and by buying, storing and exporting surplus commodities. In Canada the economy is less diverse and industrialized, and politicians have therefore had less money to spend, so they have relied more on import restrictions and domestic supply management. Canada has no school lunch program but donates more food to overseas aid.

On both sides of the border, governments have undertaken almost all of the research, development and education related to agriculture and farming and have offered substantial subsidies to lower the cost of borrowing to buy land.

At the moment, the key subsidy in the United States is for corn and soybean producers. The result is that more corn and soybeans are produced than would otherwise be the case, more are held in inventory and more are exported into world markets. The effect of high production, high inventories and low prices ripples across all other crops and into the livestock, poultry and dairy sectors of the U.S. farming economy. The U.S. federal government policy respecting corn and soybeans has also had a powerful influence on land prices.

In Canada the key subsidies are for grain transportation to export from the Prairies and for the dairy industry. The grain transportation subsidy was hidden in the past because it was a fixed rate that could not increase. Now it's out in the open in the form of a subsidy from the federal treasury to the railways of more than $600 million a year. It has the effect of enabling grain farmers to set a higher price for their grain, which must compete with sellers from the United States and other countries around the world.

The Canadian subsidy to the dairy industry is about $300 million a year. It's $6.03 per hectoliter, paid directly to dairy farmers, but only for the amount of milk required for the domestic market. If farmers produce more, they have to sell it at depressed world market prices. To signal that message back to farmers, marketing boards charge levies against every gallon of surplus milk dairy farmers ship to market. All farmers have a quota, so they know exactly how much milk will draw the full domestic price, plus subsidy, and how much will attract the cripplingly high ($38 per hectoliter) export levy. Having accepted these restrictions on production, dairy farmers have in return been granted protection against imports, which might otherwise undermine their production restraints.

This general approach has been copied by the chicken, egg and turkey industries but without benefit of direct government subsidies. In the poultry industry that has meant that imports from the United States have been strictly restrained by quota so that farmers can set prices high enough to cover their production costs for the volume that's needed for the Canadian market, and no more.

In the United States, similar production restraints apply in the so-called land-set-asides or milk levies, but these are voluntary. Farmers can choose to participate and benefit from the subsidies or stay out and take whatever the market offers. In Canada the controls are mandatory, and anybody who wants a piece of the dairy, chicken, egg or turkey business has to buy a quota, which is the right to market products at the protected price.

The effect of U.S. subsidies has been to drive up the price of land. The effect of Canadian policies has been to drive up the cost of quota for supply management commodities, and of land for other commodities. Quota is now the biggest cost of getting into the dairy and poultry industries. In Ontario, milk quota costs about $7,000 per cow and egg quota about $35 per hen.

Why is the farming situation so much worse today?

The main reason was the 1972 beginning of a new boom in grain exports. That's when Russia decided to buy massive quantities of feed and food grains. Russia and China were buying from Canada long before they became the U.S. farmers' best clients, so the effects of their buying were felt in Canada for a few years before the huge impact that came in 1972 and has been dubbed the Great Russian Grain Robbery. Not only did Russia buy massive amounts of grain that year, driving prices to three and four times prepurchase levels, but it stayed in the market, and grain prices were sustained at a new high for several years.

Resources poured into U.S. and Canadian agriculture—new capital, machinery and farmers. Production poured back out. With the exception of the 1983 harvest, which was reduced by drought and the U.S. Payment-in-Kind (PIK) program, North America's farmers produced far more food than they could sell at a price adequate to cover their new and higher production costs. Government subsidies made up some but not all of the margin.

And that's where our agriculture is today, stuck with an abundance of resources tied up in producing more food for which the world is unable or unwilling to pay a price adequate to cover costs. There's plenty of demand from poor and hungry people, but they lack resources to pay the going price. That situation is unlikely to improve in the next decade or two. That leaves two basic options—massive government subsidies to provide farmers just enough income to keep them farming or a massive lowering of production costs, either by bankrupting thousands of existing farmers and driving their land prices lower or by finding and implementing cost-saving technology.

There is something spiritual in the tilling of the soil. When the ground is prepared and seeds are planted to die in it, new life miraculously springs forth and multiplies that which is planted.

Faced with this difficult situation, farmers have asked politicians for help. They have asked for: (1) Strong action against imports, including U.S. pleas for duties and quotas against Canadian pork, potatoes, beef and raspberries. (2) Subsidies to lower the cost of borrowing money. (3) Moratoriums on foreclosures and bankruptcies. (4) Export subsidies. (5) Direct subsidies, massive government purchases of surplus commodities and price support policies.

All of these policies would likely make the situation worse in the longer run because all would attract or hold more resources in agriculture. The U.S. difficulties are made worse by the high value of the dollar, which makes it difficult to export and pulls imports into the country. Part of the reason for the high value of the U.S. dollar is massive government borrowing, some of it to pay for farm subsidies. Foreigners lend their money to the U.S. government because the risks are low and interest rates are high. So money flows into the United States and pushes the value of the U.S. dollar higher. This will eventually correct itself, and Canadian farmers and those in other nations will begin to have more trouble selling their products to rich U.S. buyers and will face increased competition in their own markets from U.S. commodities.

If the Canadian and U.S. dollars return to par, there will be massive adjustments to be made in Canada's fruit, vegetable, grain, beef and pork industries. The suffering will be most painful for those who bought into the business while the U.S. dollar was high and therefore paid premium prices for their land and livestock.

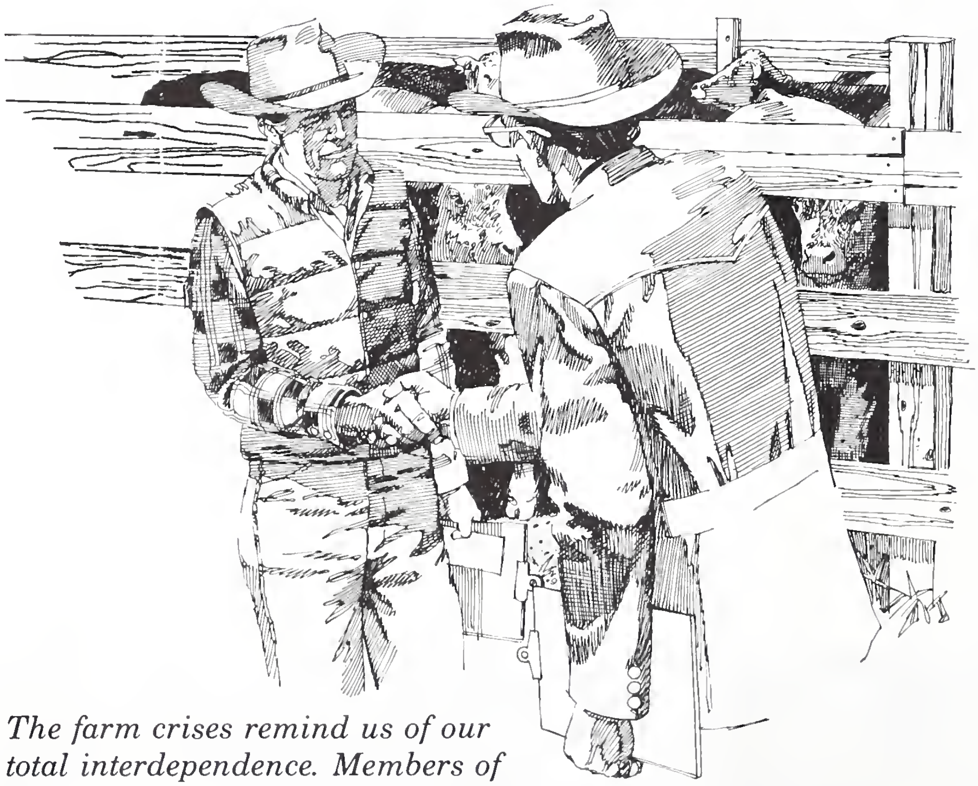
One final word about credit.

In Canada the main sources of farm credit have been the federal government's Farm Credit Corporation, five chartered banks and family members, mainly parents. In the United States more money is made available from private lending institutions, which enjoy some form of backing from government policy. In both countries farm debt mounted sharply in the wake of post-1972 grain prices and inflating land values.

In the United States, as farmers have experienced trouble paying back their loans, some financial institutions have failed. That has created turmoil for all other clients of those institutions. So far nothing similar has happened to Canadian farmers.

But the Canadian system is under heavy pressure. The Farm Credit Corporation is carrying about $5 billion in loans on its books, and about 20 percent of its clients are unable to pay interest and principal. It's the other FCC clients who must make up for that loss in the form of higher interest rates. As for the Canadian banks, their lending portfolios are so diverse that they have so far chosen to write off their farm lending losses and are in no imminent danger of collapse. They have taken even larger losses in overseas lending and in loans to the oil and gas industry in Canada yet continue to be profitable. In the United States many banks depend so heavily on farmers that they face collapse. Banks that are members of the farm credit system have $75 billion outstanding and estimate that 20 percent of those loans are in trouble. It's likely that federal governments in both Canada and the United States will provide more backing to the farm credit system, either as guarantees on farm loans or as subsidies on interest rates or both. Again, the main impact of those policies will be to hold more resources in agriculture—both money and people—than would otherwise be the case.

In summary then, the farming sector of both the Canadian and U.S. economies is undergoing the worst depression since the 1930s. About 10 percent of the farmers have been bankrupted in the past seven years, with the suffering beginning with beef feedlot operators in the late 1970s and extending now to pork and cash crop farmers. The situation is so bad today that another 15 to 20 percent of the farmers in both countries could be wiped out soon. Governments in both countries have adopted policies aimed at improving farm incomes, but in both cases the policies have also tended to increase production costs and to price North American food out of the reach of the vast majority of the world's hungry consumers. Farmers on both sides of the border are pressuring for subsidies and policies which would tend to reinforce the dilemma, and politicians are likely to respond to the lobbies with subsidies and trade policies that will bolster farm revenues and therefore hold resources in agriculture. The longer-term prospects for farmers therefore range from bleak to dismal. Those who quit this year will have to build new lives and careers. Those who survive face the prospect of a lifetime of hard work, high risks and low returns, broken only occasionally by short spurts of higher commodity prices. *A Meetinghouse article* •



The farm crises remind us of our total interdependence. Members of our communities need each other. When we permit this truth to develop among us, it will also point to our natural need for God.

How deserted lies the city (Lamentations 1)

Monty Ledford

What does a city—or a nation—do when it feels pain? Could it help us all if we learned to moan openly?

I am writing this article on a holiday weekend. We are visiting my wife's parents in Holland, Mich. It's cozy here. Elaine and Grandma are shopping; the baby is napping. How unlike the terrible scenes of *Lamentations.* My stable, comfortable life sets me a world away from the suffering of ancient Jerusalem. Isn't that one of the difficulties of understanding such a book? My entire pudgy (or dieting), air-conditioned generation knows little or nothing of real deprivation. Even America's wars have devastated other people's lands, not our own.

There is a further difficulty. I am an individualist. What do I care of others' troubles, aside from the sympathy I feel when I imagine similar things happening to me? This individualism also represents a Grand Canyon of separation from the ancient Jewish poet. For him the family, the tribe, the people was the basic unit of thought and feeling. His mind might run like this: What good does it do for me to prosper if my people are in disgrace? My thoughts are more likely to be, I gotta be *me*, whatever my family, church or nation experience.

I believe God has included *Lamentations* in the Bible to train us to see things as God sees them, which is the ultimate definition of seeing realistically. If we enter this text as much as we can, we can better see suffering and the corporate life of the church and humanity as our own experience. And who knows when the bitter pill of these poems will help us to endure an epidemic of suffering?

Chapter one features two speakers: the poet and the city of Jerusalem called "the Daughter of Zion." The poet speaks in vv. 1-11. Then the victim of destruction speaks, like a TV scene when the announcer ends his report and the camera turns to focus on the disaster victim. Our stomachs tighten a little as she begins to speak, "Is it nothing to you?"

The picture is not a happy one. In the background we distinctly hear groaning. Groans are mentioned five times in this chapter (vv. 4, 8, 11, 21, 22). We are uncomfortable with groans and moans even in a nursing home on a deathbed, where, if anywhere, a person ought to have the right to groan. Groans embarrass us. When my wife and I lived in Philadelphia we lived next to a cemetery. On two separate Saturday mornings we heard the unearthly wailing of a family member breaking down at the graveside. Our reserve was ruffled. The ancient Jews felt no such reserve. Dancing and shouting served for celebration, wailing and weeping for mourning. The deserted (v. 18), starving (19), dying city is a place of moaning. Perhaps our own grief would be more bearable if we could learn its expression.

Worst of all is that "there is no one to comfort." Ten cents of hope will keep our spirits up in the face of $1,000 of discouragement. The Daughter of Jerusalem has spent her last 10 cents of hope, and five times in chapter one she says there is no one to comfort her (2, 9, 16, 17, 21). Yet in the midst of hopelessness she raises her voice to God (20ff).

The burden of this prayer is twofold. For all the shock, the suffering and groans, the poet has the city admit her sins as the cause (5, 8, 14, 18, 20, 22). There is no attempt at excuse. It is this that makes me think that our nation, for all its piety and public profession of evangelical faith, is far from revival. I am not sure we really see ourselves as sinful.

But Zion's prayer voices more uncomfortable sentiments yet. Zion prays for revenge (21, 22). I know the difficulty with revenge prayers, and I will deal with that in time. For now, try to understand this prayer from three angles: Its intensity is an index of Jerusalem's suffering, at which we are hardly in a position to turn up our noses; its existence is a simple recognition of the reality of God's wrath; its form is a plea that God would punish the enemy *as Zion had been punished.* You and I often want God to treat our enemies the way they really deserve, while we maintain that he should treat us the way we think we deserve. Zion at least has already taken its share of the medicine.

Your assignment: Count the number of times God himself is the subject of the sentences in 2:1-8. Also answer the following questions: How are a prophet and pastor alike? How different? Does a pastor have the same temptation as the prophet to preach acceptable things? Why or why not? *Second in a series on Lamentations*

Monty Ledford, 11 Dean N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505, is pastor at the North Park Mennonite Church.

We believe in baptism (Foundations for

Erna J. Fast

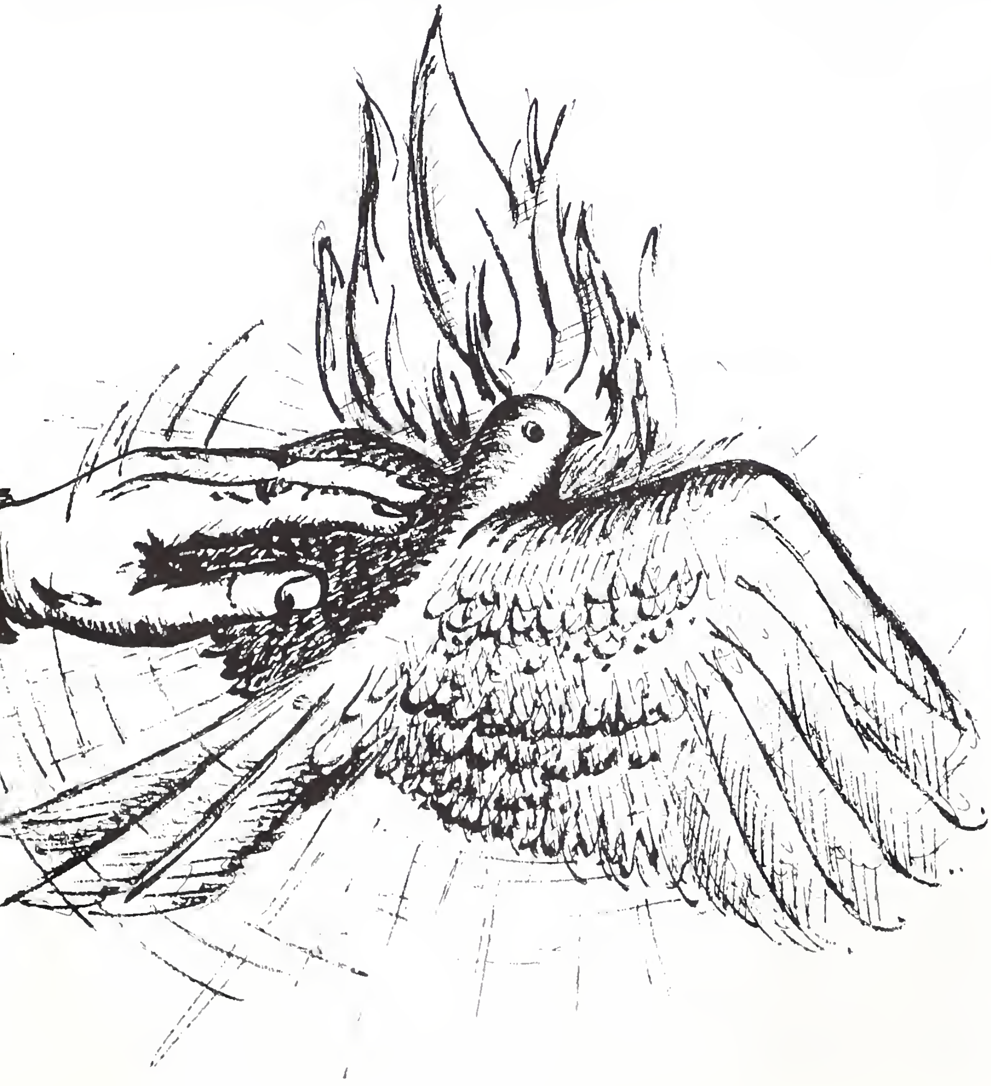
"Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug in the time of his father Abraham" (Genesis 26:18a).

As Isaac reclaimed the heritage of his father, so today we need to recapture the wellsprings bound up in the symbolism of baptism. A better understanding of this "distinguishing mark of separation and commitment," as the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* defines baptism, may offer more enlightened and empowering meaning for our daily life as Christians. The rite of baptism is rich with symbolic meaning.

Symbols communicate the meaning of reality. When this is lost or becomes distorted, something of lesser value fills the vacuum. In our contemporary culture we are immersed in a sea of symbols. The power of the symbol is part of our lives—conscious or otherwise.

Christianity is clothed in symbolism. Its most sublime expression is the Incarnation—God's love made known in Christ. A beautiful Advent hymn sings thus: "Yea, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning He shall suffice me, for he hath sufficed; Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning, Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ" (Frederick W. H. Myers). As Advent marks an end and a beginning, as it declares the fulfillment of the promise of God, the miracle of the Infinite becomes finite, the act of saving grace completed for us in the life of Christ, so, in the words of P. T. Forsyth, (baptism) ended the way *to* Christ, and began the life *in* Christ. This reality, which we speak of as being born again, is bound up inexorably with the rite of baptism in our Anabaptist history.

Baptism is a symbol of God's cleansing and sending us forth as his servants in the world.



Baptism is basic to Jesus' ministry and to the life of the church from its beginning. Each of the Gospels gives an account of Jesus' baptism with God's own witness pointing to the fulfillment of Christ's mission (Luke 12:50) and culminating on the cross with the cry, "It is finished." With his baptism in the Jordan Jesus forecast the cross, the price of our salvation, and in his resurrection we have victory over death. The Great Commission calls us to "go . . . baptize." At Pentecost the church was born through the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the seal of God's witness to all the world (2 Corinthians 1:22).

To present with greater clarity and force the powerful message in the rite of baptism is indeed a challenge for today. How often do members in our congregations refer only to outward form and practice when asked about the meaning of baptism in their lives? In how many instances is it perceived primarily as entry into membership in a local congregation? To what extent is the preparation almost routine and scheduled for specific age groups of young people with the questionable corollary of peer pressure and misdirected bonding with those involved in such preparation? For how many is baptism a purely personal, dated crisis experience? Where is the impact of the third of the three great church festivals—Pentecost—recognized in this event? Are the symbols of the rite comprehended as marks of separation and commitment?

"In the beginning was the Word." No symbol is greater than a word. The spoken word articulates what is in mind and heart. The Gospels begin with the voice from heaven affirming Jesus' Sonship at his baptism. Paul writes, "The word is near you . . . confess with your mouth." Our Anabaptist heritage points to the importance placed on articulating through the spoken word one's pledge of renunciation and obedience at the moment of baptism. It suggests words of testimony, confession and commitment.

our faith—6)

Where this is missing there is tremendous loss.

Water has been an impressive symbol throughout human history. Scripture is filled with its imagery: fountains of the deep, waves and billows, streams in the desert. Water as a symbol for cleansing is obvious. However, far more significant is its message of passing through the water, fording a stream: its symbolism for birth and death. The story of Noah portrays the transcendent message of God's gracious act of salvation (1 Peter 3:20-21). The flood that drowns also raises to new life, to rebirth. We must look to the One who through his baptism into death on the cross was raised to eternal life. In baptism we die and are raised to new life in Christ (Romans 6:3-4).

How much there is in a name! To receive a name is to receive a most precious possession. The Bible speaks often of the power in a name and in naming. Jacob, after wrestling with God at Peniel, was told, "Your name will no longer be Jacob but Israel." When Simon was introduced to Jesus, he heard the words, "You will be called Peter." When Jesus was baptized, a voice from heaven spoke, "You are my Son, whom I love." As God named his Son, so at baptism we are called by name and baptized into his name upon repentance and confession of faith.

Rodin's *Hand of God* and Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam* portray, as no words can, the symbolism found in a hand. In Scripture hands were raised in blessing or in curse. Jesus healed by the touch of his hand. Paul reminds Timothy of the gift received through the laying on of his hands (2 Timothy 1:6-7). At our baptism hands are laid on us and we are called to a common ministry in Christ. In our Anabaptist tradition, ordination to the priesthood of all believers becomes particularly significant. We are all ordained to ministry in baptism.

> *"At our baptism hands are laid on us and we are called to a common ministry in Christ."*

Every baptism within the congregation at worship becomes a Pentecost experience. The dove in Noah's time and at Jesus' baptism, the rushing wind and tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost, these biblical symbols confirm a new age of grace; they express the overwhelming gift of the Holy Spirit, an occasion for renewal, for a fresh outpouring of God's presence on all who participate in repentance and praise. So at baptism "we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Thus in the rite of baptism we accept the charge to discipleship within this community of faith, relying on the Spirit for enabling grace to witness and to serve the cause of Christ. Within this new covenant our baptism is "not primarily the symbol of a past experience" (H. S. Bender in *Anabaptist Vision*) as an entry into the church, but it becomes a daily reminder that we are called not only to have faith in Christ but to be followers of Christ. It is not "I was baptized" but "I *am* baptized."

Erna J. Fast, 321 N. Maple, Hutchinson, KS 67501, is a member of First Mennonite Church.

MCC openings

Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., has immediate employment opportunities for an experienced secretary in MCC Peace Section and for an administrative assistant in Information Services. Also coming up in spring and summer are openings for secretaries, receptionist and administrative assistants.

For more information contact:
MCC Personnel Services
Box M
Akron, PA 17501
(717) 859-1151;
or
MCC Canada
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8
(204) 475-3550.

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Applications are invited for the position of executive director for MCC BC.
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Mennonite Mutual Aid

**Individual Retirement Annuity*

Support for the peace movement in Thailand has increased in recent months. A successful peace campaign launched last summer by non-governmental organizations helped to create public awareness of Thailand's emerging peace movement. Mennonite Central Committee was involved peripherally in these peace initiatives. Campaign officials studied books and articles from MCC Thailand's peace library as they organized the campaign events.

The executive committee of the General Board of the General Conference achieved, in 1985, parity of male/female representation, according to the September/October 1985 *MCC Women's Concerns Report.* This is the only one of the 30 boards surveyed for this issue to carry that distinction. Several others, however, approach parity: the GC Commission on Education, GC Commission on Overseas Mission and MC Mennonite Publication Board. The overall rate of women's participation on GC boards, excluding the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, is 40 percent, compared to 30 percent for MC boards and 18 percent for MCC boards.

NEWS

'Obstacles to the lake' discussed

Conference shows Filipinos' struggle, spirit

Minneapolis (Meetinghouse)—In the Adams-Jefferson room of a hotel here, about 60 people from various church groups entered the history, the struggles and the hopes of the Philippines. Except for meals and sleeping, they lived there Feb. 19-22 during a conference sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section.

Most of the participants, which included Filipinos, had served in or at least visited the country that has become a "hot spot" and much in the news. One person had served there under MCC from 1946-49. The meetings had the flavor of a reunion of dear friends, and planner Earl Martin of MCC's East Asia department expressed the wish that everyone there could "visit the Philippines in these days."

"The Struggle and the Spirit," the conference's theme, was evident in many ways. In contrast to much of the news in the North American press, the struggle is not between President Ferdinand Marcos and opposition leader Corazon Aquino, with communist insurgents a third force. The major struggle, said resource people repeatedly, is between the majority of the people, who face increasing poverty and violence, and a ruling elite that includes the military and supports multinational corporations. The largely church-based, people's movement, though virtually ignored by the press, is the most significant element in the current Philippine struggle, according to resource people.

At a simulated Philippine coffee shop (from left): Brenda Stoltzfus, Earl Martin, Karl Gaspar, Jet Birondo

Two of these resource people were Filipinos: Karl Gaspar, a church leader recently released after two years as a political prisoner, and Jet Birondo, a church woman who directs a child development center and has worked for human rights concerns. In several sessions, using lectures, slides, songs, skits, liturgy and symbols, they communicated "The Philippines: Who are we? What is our history? Our economy? Our church?" "Our Stories, Our Lives" and "What is Violence? Where is Hope?"

The latter topic prompted extended discussion. How to live non-violently in the Philippine setting, where oppressive violence is so pervasive, is a question with which MCC struggles deeply, said Martin. Birondo said that the Filipino church also struggles with the question, though less in terms of non-violence vs. violence than justice vs. injustice.

According to Gaspar, the direction of what he calls "the prophetic church's struggle" derives from the people who are suffering. "The Filipinos are basically a non-violent people," he said, "but in certain instances individuals may decide to support the armed struggle."

Dave Williams, a United Methodist who spent 15 years in the Philippines, said, "To confront violence it is important to be in the gray areas of risk, to place ourselves at the heart of the struggle for life."

The struggle of Filipinos was further communicated through the following:

- the film "Global Assembly Line," which depicts the suffering of workers, both in the United States and Third World countries, at the hands of multinational corporations;
- Walden Bello, co-director of the Philippine Human Rights Lobby, who offered an extensive analysis of U.S. military strategy as it relates to the Philippines;
- MCC worker Brenda Stoltzfus, who showed slides and told stories of women caught in prostitution at the U.S. naval base at Olongapo;
- Dan and Esther Epp-Tiessen, recently returned from the Philippines, where they were country representatives for MCC, who described how MCC is responding there.

Balancing this emphasis on struggle was the portrayal of Filipinos' hope and joy. This came out in the lively singing, joyful dancing and jubilant worship. Perry Yoder, who spent several months in the Philippines, contrasted the glum faces he sees among North American church people and the joyful hope he experienced with Filipi-

The governing body of the General Conference has established a fund to assist small congregations in sending delegates to the organization's triennial sessions in Saskatoon. Individuals or congregations are encouraged to send a contribution for "Saskatoon delegate travel assistance" to 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, or Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Congregations wishing travel assistance should submit a request to the general secretary at the Newton address. Every congregation is encouraged to have at least one delegate at the conference sessions.

"Tell your friends in America about our oppression. Tell them about our struggle," said a Basotho migrant mine worker involved in South African trade unions during an interview with Mennonite Central Committee worker Randall Eigsti. "Apartheid is on its way out. It's only a matter of time," said the migrant worker. When asked what Eigsti could do, he said, "Tell [your friends] about our struggle. Tell them we are willing to live with the hardships of economic sanctions because it will speed up our liberation."

The Biblical Way of Peace by Helmut Harder, Winnipeg, is now available in at least six languages in addition to English: German, French, Spanish, Chinese, Telegu and Bengali. His *Guide to Faith* has been translated into Chinese. Harder is on the faculty of Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg.

Marge Ediger leads a reader's theater group in a candlelight procession.

nos. This was less talked about than demonstrated at the conference. Gaspar and Birondo, in particular, had participants alternately laughing and in tears.

Yoder, associate professor of Old Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., led three Bible studies under the theme "God's Spirit: People's Struggle." He first discussed "Law and Liberation" and noted that biblical law is always post-liberation law. Under "Struggle and Hope" he said that biblical hope is not pie-in-the-sky wishful thinking but actively involved in the present. "Hope comes out of struggle, not struggle out of hope," he said. Lastly he spoke of "Love and Transformation." He called upon MCC to re-evaluate their mission strategy. "Development makes sense only in a post-liberation context in which people choose their direction."

In discussing MCC strategy, the Epp-Tiessens referred to the development image of teaching people to fish instead of simply giving them fish. But in the Philippines the people can't get to the lake, and MCC's main approach has been a preventative one of "obstacle removal." Since Philippine farmers are losing their land to multinational corporations, they have no means for development. Obstacles to the lake are largely foreign-made, and the greatest obstacle, according to the Epp-Tiessens, is U.S. military aid. Therefore, education of North Americans is an important element of MCC work. Thus this conference.

Although reporting included political and theological analyses and strategies, more up front were personal stories. Participants shared names and pictures of people known by them who have been imprisoned, tortured or killed by the Philippine government.

A litany of affirmation, confessions, challenges and commitments brought the conference to a close. At the end, Gaspar and Birondo used a piece of multicolored cloth, an important symbol in the Philippine struggle, as a means of remembrance. The cloth was torn into pieces and handed to each participant. The ripping of the cloth reminded one of the terrible tearing of the lives of Filipinos, and the pieces of fabric were fragile treasures that each one carried tenderly home as they left the room, as they left the Philippines.

Gordon Houser

Letter to be sent to churches

From Feb. 19-22 we, an ecumenical group of some 55 people, met in a conference sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee on the Philippine situation. The following concerns surfaced:

1. We learned about the poverty and oppression afflicting most Filipinos: farmers losing their land to local landlords and transnational corporations, and workers receiving less than a subsistence wage but harassed and killed when they attempt to request what is lawfully theirs.
2. We learned about Alex, Anna Mae, Trank, Lena and many others who have been victims of torture, imprisonment and death at the hands of the Philippine military because of their efforts to help the poor. We learned about the struggle of people in the Philippine church who seek to be faithful to the message of Jesus by preaching good news to the poor and setting captives free (Luke 4:18-19).
3. We are concerned that extensive U.S. aid has allowed President Ferdinand Marcos to rule by force and victimize ordinary Filipinos.
4. We are concerned that while the U.S. administration seeks to distance itself from Marcos it assumes the right to intervene in Philippine affairs. This denies the right to self-determination.
5. We are concerned about the attempts to picture Filipino resistance as conflict between communism and democracy. The farmers and workers are more concerned about food and education for their children than about political ideology.

Consequently we commit ourselves and invite others to:

1. Become more informed historically about the Philippine situation and learn from the ordinary Filipino.
2. Urge our fellow citizens and our political leaders to help end military and economic aid to President Marcos and any administration which might replace him that is not committed to the welfare of all Filipinos.
3. Pray for an end to violence and oppression in the Philippines. Pray that "justice might roll down like waters, and righteousness like a neverending stream" (Amos 5:24).
4. Express our solidarity with the Philippine church as it seeks to discern how to serve Christ in a difficult situation.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has completed fund raising for its $2 million library project by meeting the terms of a $200,000 Kresge Foundation challenge grant. Completion of the new library is scheduled for August, and its dedication will be one of many events planned during the next year to celebrate the school's centennial.

Harold and Katherine Lue of Hwalien, Taiwan, were in Elkhart, Ind., for the month of January for her to study during the interterm at Mennonite Biblical Seminary. An evangelist at Mei-Lun Church in Hwalien, her studies were subsidized by organizations within the General Conference, including Women in Mission and Ministerial Leadership Services. Harold Lue is assistant business manager at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hwalien.

"This weekend will go down as a historic occasion in the annals of Mennonite Collegiate Institute [Gretna, Man.]," said outgoing board chairman Henry Enns after a weekend of discussion and priority setting involving some 65 board members, staff and spouses. Under the guidance of facilitator John Neufeld, president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, think tank participants worked at purpose, curriculum, students, residence, public relations, sports and music, and staffing.

Bernie Wiebe resigns as editor

Newton, Kan.—Bernie Wiebe, Winnipeg, who has served as editor of *The Mennonite* since 1976, has resigned effective Aug. 31. He will teach and do research/writing for the Mennonite Studies Centre at the University of Winnipeg.

Wiebe, a native of Altona, Man., holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Goshen (Ind.) College, a BD from Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and a doctorate in counseling and guidance from the University of North Dakota. From 1973-76 he served as president of Freeman (S.D.) Junior College and Academy. He had previously been an elementary and high school teacher and conference minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, with responsibilities in counseling and radio-TV communications.

As editor he has overseen changes in the format of *The Mennonite* as it has gone from a 16-page weekly to a 24-page biweekly and now semimonthly paper. He also oversaw a readership survey in 1980 and the magazine's 100th anniversary and the conference's 125th anniversary issue last year.

Job opening

Lakewood Retreat Center has a full-time head cook/food service position open. Lakewood is a Christian retreat and camp conference center owned and operated as an arm of the Mennonite Church. Lakewood is located half way between Brooksville and Dade City, Fla.

For more information, call or write:
Lakewood Retreat Center
c/o Terry Burkhalter
25458 Dan Brown Hill Road
Brooksville, FL 33512
(904) 796-4097.

Help needed

Swift Current Bible Institute is now receiving applications for the following positions:
principal, beginning in June,
administrative assistant, beginning in May,
teachers, beginning in September.

Please send all applications and inquiries to:
SCBI
Attention: Personnel Committee
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

Position in deaf ministries

The Orrville Mennonite Church is interested in finding someone trained in deaf ministries and signing to serve at least half-time in leading the eight-year-old deaf ministry.

Please send letter of interest and/or resume to:
Orrville Mennonite Church
1305 W. Market St.
Orrville, OH 44667
(216) 682-5801.

Job openings

Director, **skill trainer** and **direct-care staff** are needed at **Oregon Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.**, (group homes for developmentally disabled adults).

Send inquiries to:
Jane Toews
Teaching Research
345 Monmouth Ave.
Monmouth, OR 97361
(503) 838-1220, ext. 401.

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Orlando and Violet Goering, missionaries in Japan, are staff at the World Friendship Center in Hiroshima. Part of their assignment is to visit A-bomb survivors ("hibakusha"). "There are 339 residents," say the Goerings, "in the Hiroshima A-Bomb Survivors' Home. Of these, 60 have no family or visits from family members." An adopt-a-hibakusha program will establish person-to-person contact with these individuals. More information is available from the Goerings through the Commission on Overseas Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

More than 600 top progressive U.S. leaders are scheduled to meet in Washington March 16-19 for education and action planning on major public policy issues. The gathering, entitled Impact Congressional Briefing, is sponsored by National Impact, which is supported by nearly two dozen national religious bodies, as well as by the National Council of Churches and Church Women United. For information contact National Impact, 100 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 544-8636.

Lawrence (Kan.) Mennonite Fellowship welcomed 18 "official" members into the congregation during the Sunday morning worship service Jan. 26. Moderator Bob Franz and pastor Jean Hendricks led in a brief service of commitment. The resident membership of LMF is now 31, with about 50 attending on Sunday mornings.

CMinBC acknowledges mission field at its doorstep

Witness, *10 young Mennonites who performed at the conference*

Clearbrook, B.C.—Displaying a stunning economy of time, British Columbia Mennonites (General Conference) conducted their annual business in nine hours Feb. 21-22 at Eben-Ezer Church here. This efficiency was probably enhanced by an all-day meeting of pastors, deacons and spouses.

Even so, there was time for three substantial sermons on the theme "Living in Christ's Fullness." George E. Janzen, pastor of Cedar Valley Church in Mission, spoke on this fullness through knowledge of Christ; Ron Voth, teacher at Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, on spiritual awareness; and Walter Bergen, lay worker in Emmanuel Church, Clearbrook, on reconciliation. Bergen called the gathering from CMinBC's 26 congregations to stand with the oppressed. "We have become," he said, "sleek and fat in the promised land."

The Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia is, in fact, a conference of immigrants to the "promised land." German and Russian Mennonites have been joined by Chinese Mennonites. Of 1,500 Mennonites in Vancouver, 15 percent are Chinese. Of the 40 Chinese congregations in the greater Vancouver Regional District, two belong to this conference. The Chinese population is 130,000. "Chinese ministries needs a larger percent of the budget," said Palmer Becker of Peace Church, Richmond.

Coming in increasing numbers are Cambodians, East Indians, Hispanics, Koreans and Laotians. "Our mission field is knocking on our door," said Dorothy and Jacob Giesbrecht, who work among Indo-Canadians (mostly Sikh) in Clearbrook.

"Now is a time of watering," said Sylang Kaneboodtra, pastor of an emerging Laotian congregation that numbers 21 members and 63 dependents. "Doors are open if we're willing to serve," reported Gerald Klassen, pastor from Burns Lake, referring to Native Canadians. He quoted one of his friends as saying, "Mennonites and Natives must be from the same stock."

Delegates voted to support a church-planting project with $28,000. This committee also envisions planting three churches over five years and is submitting a plan for support ($500,000 for personnel and buildings) to the expected General Conference Mennonite Development Fund Drive.

In other action the delegates voted to give Columbia Bible College $39,000 (also above budget) over three years to help retire the deficit, and they gave the camp committee permission to build an open-air gymnasium at the conference's 25-year-old Camp Squeah near Hope. They passed resolutions to survey attendance and curriculum patterns in their Sunday schools and to interact with Mennonites in Paraguay by exchange visits of pastors.

Resolutions that were tabled (largely because limited time resulted in insufficient information) included one that would have connected the newly formed Christian Conciliation Service to the education committee. What was not general information is that the Canadian government recently awarded CCS $100,000 to create a model—that this would not be added to the conference's budget. An ad hoc committee, appointed last year, will be reappointed to oversee the conciliation service that it created. Already, said David Gustafson (pastor in Langley), "several instances of deep healing are evidence of Christ's fullness among us. Unresolved conflicts are the scandal of the church. In Anabaptist-Mennonite churches, they are a travesty. We have resources. Let's use them."

The education committee will be providing "teams on the road" to resource the congregations. A Christian education resource list (of people) was distributed, and a drama and arts festival is planned for 1986.

Delegates approved in principle that youth worker Aiden Enns be moved from part-time to full-time employment. Conference minister Peter Kehler admonished the gathering to "let young people try their wings, in Sunday school teaching and in worship leading."

New Canadians were largely absent from the ballot. This will likely change soon as the conference's 4,500 members take seriously the mission field at their door. *Muriel Thiessen Stackley*

Principal needed

The executive committee of **Freeman Academy**, an inter-Mennonite junior-senior high school in Freeman, S.D., is seeking applicants for the position of principal. This position, including responsibilities as chief executive officer, opens **July 1**.

For further details contact:
LaVerne Graber
Chairman of the Board of Directors
Route 2
Box 187
Freeman, SD 57029
(605) 925-7782.

The 45th reunion of CPS Camp No. 5 at Colorado Springs, Colo., will be held July 20 at Ponderosa Camp north of Colorado Springs in the Black Forest. The camp is also tentatively reserved for July 19. For reservations and information write to Harry Froese, 32788 Co. Road 34, La Junta, CO 81050.

Marvin Frey, Mennonite Central Committee country representative in Maseru, Lesotho, called Jan. 20 following the bloodless coup of the same day there. He said there was "widespread support for the change among the general population, church leadership, the South Africans and the opposition." However, Frey said that South African refugees in Lesotho are concerned that "a move to the right politically may result in [their] repatriation to South Africa."

Christian Leaders for Responsible Television is a new organization that represents the largest and most diverse number of Christian leaders to ever jointly address a common social issue in the history of the United States, according to Donald E. Wildmon, its executive director. It is a new coordinated effort to reduce sex, violence, profanity and anti-Christian programming by the networks. The group is composed of nearly 1,600 Christian leaders, including the heads of approximately 70 denominations. Among them is Vern Preheim, general secretary of the General Conference.

IMPC comes of age, sees growing role

Hyderabad, India (MWC)—The International Mennonite Peace Committee, a fledgling organization, is coming of age. This was evident from the discussion and decisions undertaken by the committee as it met here Dec. 5-7, 1985.

Activities included peace seminars in Hyderabad and Calcutta, preaching in Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches on two Sundays, and three days of meetings for the committee itself.

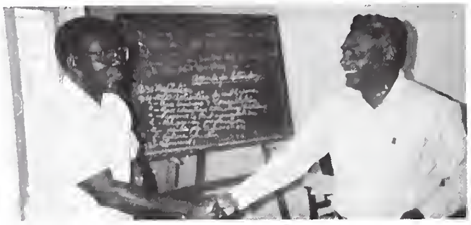
In his opening remarks, Asian representative R. S. Lemuel of India emphasized the crucial importance of a worldwide Mennonite peace group. He pointed out that while non-church peace groups have their place, they are not based on an eternal foundation.

A highlight of the meeting was the report from committee members on the role of the church in the society and nation from which they come.

Cesar del Aguila of Guatemala cautioned North American and European churches not to take unilateral peace action in Latin America without consulting with the churches in the region. Mukanza Ilunga of Zaire highlighted the lack of peace teaching and educational materials in Zaire and in Africa generally.

Philip Mudenda of Zambia pointed to the close link between economics and justice. The high interest rates charged by the European and North American nations impoverish African countries. He challenged churches in the developed nations to speak to their governments against this injustice.

R. S. Lemuel depicted the tensions faced by the Mennonite church in India. Internally the church needs help in reconciling disputes peacefully. Externally the church lives as a minority (3 percent of India's population is Christian) in the midst of a society dominated by Hindus and Muslims.



Mukanza Ilunga (left) of Zaire, who was chosen as chairman of IMPC, congratulates R. S. Lemuel of India on his efforts in organizing the IMPC's meetings.

Both Hansulrich Gerber of Switzerland and Helmut Harder of Canada responded by confessing that in Europe and North America there was not sufficient sensitivity to complicity in these problems and that matters of peace and justice were on the priority list of only a few congregations.

The committee set three priorities:

1. Provide resources and help plan Mennonite World Conference events.
2. Learn the importance of listening to and reflecting on the experience of the churches and sharing information. Statements should grow out of sharing and Bible study together, an approach that leads to new theological experience and personal change in people's lives.
3. Support peace and justice education in the churches.

The matter of representation was also reviewed. At present the committee has one representative from each of the continents except Africa, which has two. It was decided that Asia and Latin America should be asked to increase their representation to two people as well.

The next meeting is projected for 1987 in conjunction with the MWC General Council sessions in Paraguay. A major agenda item will be to assist in planning program for the MWC assembly in Winnipeg in 1990. *Helmut Harder*

Position in music

Canadian Mennonite Bible College invites applications for a junior position in music. The major focus of this position will be in children's music (possibly forming a model children's choir), youth music and directing the CMBC Ensemble (a choral group which does considerable congregational visitation). Auxiliary areas could be accompanying, music theory, music therapy, private instruction, basic conducting or drama and fine arts. A master's degree is preferred, but not essential. A less than full-time appointment might be possible. Applicants should be committed to the Christian faith and in sympathy with the goals of the college.

Send applications and resumes by March 31 to:
Academic Dean
Canadian Mennonite Bible College
600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

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SQUEAH—"A Place of Refuge"

One hundred Salvadoran refugee families have built a community complete with two school buildings, a clinic, a store and permanent houses in the Valley of Peace refugee settlement project in Belize, reports Minor Sinclair, Mennonite Central Committee project director for the United Nations funded refugee project. Despite the success of the project, however, there was tremendous cost, says Sinclair. Other needy refugees were overlooked in the attempt to make sure this "model" refugee settlement succeeded.

St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship, just over a year old, has in place a missionary agenda for 1986. Led by Helen Wells Quintela and sponsored by Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, the dozen members are planning a second annual St. Paul Invitational for the four weekends in March. Members of the church and the fellowship visit homes in the West Side neighborhood, informing them of fellowship meetings and activities. Three Mennonite congregations in Mountain Lake, Minn., have been invited to join in this year's visitation.

Daniel Yutzy of Upland, Ind., will lead a weekend of inspirational Bible study at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center March 21-23. Focusing on the theme "Jesus: the Human Side," Yutzy will be joined by Ivonne and Glen Peachey of Belleville, Pa., in music leadership. For information contact LMCC, Route 5, Box 145, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666, (412) 423-2056.

Environmental disasters hurt too, MDS meeting told

Winnipeg (MCCC)—"I hope you will be disturbed by what I'm going to say," Sister Margeen Hoffman told 450 people gathered here for the annual All-Unit meeting of Mennonite Disaster Service. "Yes, so disturbed that you will get together later to discuss ways to respond."

With those words, she launched into a horrific description of scores of environmental disasters caused by society's blatant betrayal of the "trust given to us long ago by our Creator."

She told how scores of water sources have been hopelessly fouled by industrial pollutants; how people as far apart as Bhopal, India and Middleport, N.Y., have suffered due to leaks of deadly chemicals; how cities and industries continue to defy laws designed to prevent the escape of extremely dangerous chemicals like PCBs into the air and water; how poverty-stricken and ethnic-minority communities have been forced to bear the brunt of indiscriminate dumping of radioactive and toxic wastes; how a middle-class neighborhood built on top of a poison dump suffered an epidemic of cancer and birth defects and experienced untold economic, physical and emotional pain.

"The careless or unconcerned or unknown practices of 20 to 30 years ago are becoming the new disasters of today," she said, urging MDS to consider ways to relieve the pain that environmental disasters bring.

Hoffman came to the MDS meeting with personal experience. A well-educated Roman Catholic nun, she is director of the Ecumenical Task Force on the Niagara Frontier, a group deeply involved with the infamous Love Canal and other environmental disasters now coming to light in that region.

Speaking warmly of the efforts of MDS members, who came to the Feb. 7-8 meeting from across North America, she acknowledged that the needs of people involved in environmental calamities are much more complex and "less tangible and immediate" than those suffering natural disaster.

Sister Margeen Hoffman

However, where industrial interests wantonly ignore the biblical command to take care of the earth, Christians "are required by God to challenge the justice of such cruel and arrogant behavior," she said.

Also speaking at the meetings was Jacob Pauls, who gave a series of meditations on the conference theme, "Hope in the Context of Suffering."

Ernie Isaac, a counselor with the Eden Mental Health Centre, Winkler, Man., provided helpful guidelines for dealing with the emotional and psychological effects of disaster on its victims.

Isaac said many suffer symptoms of "disaster syndrome," which may include prolonged fears, inappropriate guilt, a preoccupation with the events of the disaster, a deep feeling of uprootedness, anxiety or depression over the loss of a familiar community, a psychological need to re-erect fences and other symbols of privacy and identity, and a conflict between the need for help and the desire to remain strong and independent.

He said those who want to minister to disaster victims need to take seriously the grief victims experience over the loss of possessions as well as loved ones. They also need to be good listeners, sensitive to local values and culture and respectful of the individual's need for privacy. They should also know where to refer people if long-term family counseling is needed.

Though individuals vary in their reaction to disaster, Isaac said, for many it can be a turning point—it can crush their lives or be a catalyst for emotional and spiritual growth. A caring Christian volunteer who comes to bring hope in the midst of hopelessness can make the difference.

The delegates also heard reports from units across the United States and Canada, where activity in 1985 was centered on tornado sites in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Ontario, floods and mudslides in Puerto Rico, and wide-scale flooding in Texas, Mississippi, Virginia, West Virginia, Florida and other parts of the eastern United States. *Doreen Martens*

Service coordinator needed

Service coordinator needed for **Mennonite Community Closet Outreach Program** at North Battleford, Sask. Position opens July 1 and is for a 2- to 3-year term. The major objective of the outreach program is to provide Christian counsel and support to needy people who come in contact with the Closet. Training in social work and experience working with people of Native ancestry an asset. Position ideal for a married couple, as one partner could work part time in the Closet Store. Honorarium D.O.E. and financial requirements.

Send resume to:
Mennonite Community Closet
1022 101st St.
North Battleford, SK S9A 0Z3.

Over 400 education, church and charitable organizations received $3.2 million in gifts from donors through the Mennonite Foundation during 1985, reports Kent Stucky, Foundation manager. The Foundation, a service of Mennonite Mutual Aid, acts as a channel for donors who wish to give property and other assets to organizations.

Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., will host the 1986 Transcultural Seminar, a two-week course in international development. The program, to be held June 1-13, is designed for people who plan to serve overseas for the first time and for returning workers in agriculture, education, development, health, nutrition and related bodies. For more information contact the dean at EMC or call (703) 433-2771.

In the future many Chinese students will get their university education through television, a method that's "convenient and cheap," according to Han Bangyan. Han, a top official in the Sichuan Bureau of Higher Education—the university authority of a province that numbers 100 million people—headed a six-member delegation that toured the United States and Canada in December 1985 at the invitation of the China Educational Exchange program.

Hart reflects on visit to the Philippines

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Joining 13 others on a 2½-week journey to the Philippines Jan. 31-Feb. 16, Lawrence Hart, Clinton, Okla., represented a Native American point of view. "I was mistaken for a Filipino time and again," says Hart, who is Cheyenne. "I took it as a compliment." Five of the group, including Hart, were Mennonite. Dorothy Friesen, Chicago, led the group.

The tour, sponsored by *Seed* magazine of Atlanta, and Jubilee, Inc., of Philadelphia, had been planned long before the elections were announced. "On election day we observed masses of people at two precincts," reports Hart. "We talked to a lot of people on the street. After the polls closed we visited Tapat, an organization created to monitor voting rights violations. Volunteers were documenting reports from other provinces—reports of people being disenfranchised—having their names removed from voting lists. Before we left Tapat, its telephone was either cut or disconnected. Many people boycotted the election, seeing it as a sham."

When the tour group was allowed to scatter, Hart chose to go by himself to northern Luzon province. There he visited native miners who are extracting gold from their own land and who have organized themselves to resist a large and aggressive corporation.

While there Hart found out about the Igorots, a tribe of native Filipinos. "They have renewed a peace pact between tribal groups," says Hart. "I was pleased to learn that they are now working cooperatively. Their common enemy is imperialism. We should develop solidarity with this group. Someone, perhaps a seminary student, should study them. They could help our body of knowledge of peace."

Hart was struck by the "stark and brutal poverty" of many people.

"Our only disappointment on the whole tour," Hart says, "was that we—U.S. citizens—were not allowed on Clark or Subic naval bases or in the U.S. embassy."

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For more information:
Faith and Learning Conference, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas 67117; Phone: (316) 283-2500

SPEAKING OUT

MCCer in El Salvador calls for bridging gap

San Salvador, El Salvador (MCC)—"Mennonite Central Committee needs to state more clearly that its work, whether relief, development, justice advocacy or presence is political," says Ron Flickinger, recently returned worker from El Salvador.

"Our motivation is not primarily political. It is Christian. Rather than being cautioned about being too political, we need to be challenged to adhere closely to the teaching and example of Jesus and the early church," he continues.

"Our North American theology does not prepare us for moving into oppressive situations in various stages of revolution. North American Christians do not have much idea of the costs of being faithful. We often emphasize security.

"MCC's vision should provide a basis for challenging its volunteers to be more faithful and take more risks rather than often raising the questions of security. We should be and need to be more pushed and challenged rather than simply tolerated when we feel God leading us to identify more closely with the suffering church. Although we should be questioned about our relationships with revolutionary movements, we should also be questioned about the compromises we make to work under oppressive governments. The church as a whole has not developed an adequate theology for making decisions about risk-taking and witness to the world."

Flickinger notes that as workers spend time in Central America they grow to realize that "we cannot be so naive as to come into these polarized situations and attempt to follow our understanding of the gospel without suffering. Christ sent his disciples out assuring them that they would be tortured and killed."

He continues, "Where in the Bible do we get the idea that we can avoid persecution if we are faithful? Should MCC even commit itself to being present in a situation if it is not willing to accept the same fate as the Christians with whom we want to be present? We cannot be a sign of God's hope in El Salvador under the present government if we are not willing to accept the consequences of being present with those who are suffering the most."

"It is natural that some tension exists between MCC, the churches and the MCC volunteers. The church has not prepared the volunteers for the poverty, injustice, suffering and violence they will encounter. New faith questions are raised. Their perceptions of the situation will constantly change. But the church should be confident enough of its preparation and MCC of its vision that adequate trust would exist to move together with the volunteers as their responses to their situations change."

Flickinger says that there is a gap not only between MCC workers in El Salvador and North American Christians but between North American and Salvadoran Christians.

"We can't make life in El Salvador fit into our North American framework. The Salvadoran Christian probably has a more biblical understanding of hope than the average North American Christian," he observes.

Flickinger says the signs of hope in El Salvador exist in small ways and are "signs of God's kingdom in the midst of a situation of evil and injustice. . . . The hope is that people are trying to be faithful in spite of the risk."

Many Salvadoran Christians believe that "God reserves his greatest care for the ones who are hurting the most" and that "God cares about the injustice and suffering in this world and wants his followers to do something about it," Flickinger says. Although most evangelical Salvadorans may not agree with this view of God," we [MCC workers] in El Salvador have made a conscious choice to identify with this new understanding," he continues.

How can the widening gap between understandings about hope, God's option for the poor and about being political be bridged between Central American and North American Christians? "The tension is becoming greater, not less. We are convinced that the gap must be bridged if we are to continue to be responsible to both our churches in North America and the churches we relate to in El Salvador. The track we are on in El Salvador is carrying us in a more 'radical' direction. The majority of our churches in North America are on a track with as few bumps and curves as they can manage.

"Can the two tracks ever be brought together through quiet diplomacy or one step at a time?" Flickinger asks. "Jesus did not offer the rich young ruler one small step on the way to being his follower. Perhaps it is time for some more direct language that will surely anger many, but couldn't this be handled in a way that would lead to reconciliation?"

He concludes the letter, "Many of us during our time as volunteers experience times of disillusionment, anger and grief as we come face to face with the injustice and oppression and learn how much our wealth is connected to the poverty of others. Why should North American Christians be expected to move toward greater faithfulness without experiencing something similar?"

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- ***Contact*** Resource Library, 21 South 12th Street, Box M, Akron, PA 17501
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or MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Hwy., Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8
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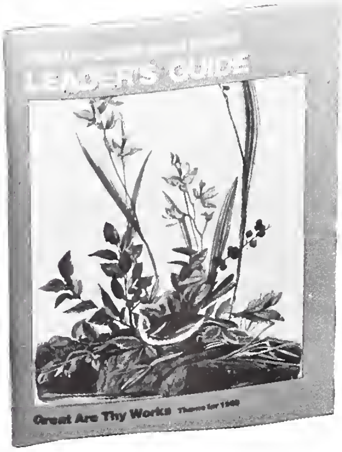

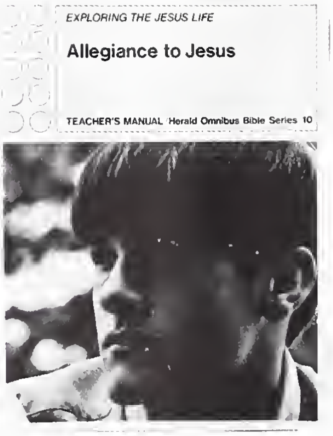

May need to die for peace

I read in your Jan. 14 issue the dream, the hope, the proposal of Ron Sider concerning Christian Peacemaking Teams. I think it is absolutely spectacular, timely and full of power. Have no fear, it will happen.

Two years ago we finished a long 7,000-mile pilgrimage on foot through 11 countries, from the Trident nuclear submarine base near Seattle to the birthplace of the Prince of Peace. It was an explicit linking of peace and Christian evangelizing. All 14 of us who began the journey were still together as we walked into Bethlehem. The Spirit was with us.

As we spoke continuously to groups I found myself saying, "We people of the Spirit must go to peace with the same sense of urgency and determination that nations call upon when they send our youth to war." I found myself growing in the conviction that the churches themselves will, in the eyes of God, be judged on this issue of peace and our willingness to courageously address it.

Thank God for the Mennonites and the Brethren. We of the Catholic Church need your example. And let all of us know that implicit in our baptism is not merely a call to peacemaking but a call to be willing to suffer martyrdom, to be killed but not to kill. And as nations assume that some of their soldiers—the cream of our youth—will be killed in making war, let us challenge the youth with the knowledge that this is also the call of peacemaking. I will keep your project in my prayers. *Jack Morris, 508 Coal Creek Road, Chehalis, WA 98532*
Jan. 31

Want to know Paraguay stories

I enjoyed your "Editor's Journal Jottings" in recent issues. I'm interested in knowing and learning more in regard to the Mennonite colonies in Paraguay. Would you write and print a complete description of the colonies, their locations, churches, populations, when established and by whom? Also a map would be helpful. *John E. Wiebe, 308 Central, Newton, KS 67114*
Feb. 4

Editor's note: John, I visited with historian Martin Friesen in Loma Plata during my time in Paraguay. He has written a couple of books on this sub-

ject, and they also have beautiful, colored maps. If you are interested in the "whole thing," please write to Martin W. Friesen, cdc Colonie Menno—Loma Plata, Asuncion, Paraguay.

On the Bible and sexuality

Our conference study guide on *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life* has a major weakness. It accommodates itself to our permissive society.

If the writers had studied *The Laws of Plato*, they might have gained some insight into the function of law and especially as it relates to this problem (see Book 1, pp. 15f; Book VIII, pp. 226ff; Book IX, pp. 270f; also the *symposium* where Socrates in word and deed overcomes the temptation to homosexual behavior).

Socrates suggests that males coming together with males and females with females is against nature. The daring of those who first did it seems to have arisen from a lack of self-restraint with regard to pleasure. The Cretans were accused of being the originators of the myth of Ganymede. Since their laws were believed to have come from Zeus, they added this myth about Zeus so that they could continue to reap the enjoyment of this pleasure as they followed Zeus therein.

Our modern authors are attempting to do much the same thing today as they try to prove God's sanction for homosexuality.

Plato suggests that powerful erotic drives are hard to manage, but he shows how unwritten laws against incest can be effective in forbidding such illicit love, as can Olympian training and love for victory sustain discipline. In addition Plato would also use strong sacred sanctions to make the law firm. Our guidelines would use religious sanctions in an opposite manner to make homosexuality acceptable.

Nor is Plato critical of shunning as are the guidelines (p. 118), for he would bar such persons from all honors in the city on grounds that they are strangers. And if someone should use violence for sexual purposes against a free woman or a boy, he or she may be killed with impunity by the violently outraged party. Pleasure should never be put before what is more just and better.

I find Plato a much better teacher on this subject than modern "experts." No wonder Whitehead said that anything that was written since his day was only adding footnotes to what he had already said. We will also find that the biblical text is much clearer if we don't force our human interpretations on it. *David Janzen, Box 594, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0*

Feb. 7

Farm not likely to be saved

Someone sent me a copy of Shantilal P. Bhagat's book *The Family Farm, Can It Be Saved?* The answer is, "Yes, it can be, but it likely will not be."

There are a number of reasons. High on the list is the tragic fact that Washington doesn't really understand the importance of the family farm to a prosperous economy. Therefore it isn't on the priority list. Nonetheless, when family farms are in trouble, more trouble surfaces with bank failures, implement and hardware businesses folding, and small towns slowly drying up.

The new farm program is probably as good as can be expected. But it isn't a good answer. Moratoriums on foreclosures only prolong the agony.

At the heart of our problem has been moral and fiscal irresponsibility. We have a president who poses as a conservative. However, he has put our nation into the deepest debt in our history. His budget deficit and world trade imbalance threaten to engulf us. The Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act may be the last fiasco. To add insult to injury, he wants an already insane military budget increased.

I predicted as much years ago. Many of our farmers in trouble nonetheless voted for him.

The various conferences that have been held are fine, but the solution does not lie there. The problem goes deeper than Washington. All of us are part of a materialistic, secular, humanistic society. Unless we can somehow recover a sense of moral sanity and responsibility—and a genuine spiritual renewal—we will sink deeper.

We have a president who has been asking for more than "the portion of goods that falleth to us." *William H. Stauffer, Route 1, Stone Creek, OH 43840*

Feb. 13

Ice cream and sexuality

In response to the person who related sexual identity to preferences in ice cream flavors (Jan. 28 issue), I find this not a helpful image.

Ice cream flavors are for the most part human creations, much like the "scientific" interpretive frameworks humans use to read their own biases back into the Bible.

I would suggest instead looking at the variety of shapes and colors in wild flowers, with some kinds more plentiful than others, or at the presence of both evergreen and deciduous trees. These images are part of the world given to us by God. (Anyone for a "down with leaf-droppers" campaign?)

Those of us who grow up to find ourselves gay or lesbian know that this identity is a part of God's purpose for our lives, and we have clues as to why. As in the Good Samaritan story, we are present in the church and world to allow the majority community to be tested in neighborly love, to be tested in responding to the different. (Who will be a neighbor?) Jesus' reaction to the Pharisees (Matthew 23:27, etc.) shows his response to people who would try to force God's world into neat little "scientific" boxes. *Frank R. Trnka, 2520 28th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55406*

Feb. 13

TOUR OF SOUTHWEST

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April 23-May 1—The Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring a tour of the scenic Southwest, including a visit to the Navajo and Hopi Mennonite communities. Arrangements have been made with Prudent Tours for transportation on modern motorcoach with restroom and air conditioning. Tour includes housing in good motels, admissions to scenic attractions, baggage handling, and the services of tour guide Pearl Janzen.

For more information contact:

Commission on Home Ministries
Box 347, Newton, KS 67114
Phone (316) 283-5100.

Our churches and the farm crisis

J. Winfield Fretz

The current crisis in agriculture is a major economic debacle. It is at the same time also a genuinely moral and spiritual problem. Those farm families presently threatened or who have lost their farms are suffering deep emotional crises as well as financial losses.

I was raised on a beautiful Pennsylvania family farm that my parents lost more than 60 years ago in the post-World War I depression. I have had a warm affection ever since for those who go through the emotionally wrenching experience of losing what is near and dear to them.

Severe economic reverses, whether the result of longtime unemployment or a business or farm failure, are almost always spiritually crushing. Those adversely affected are frustrated, they entertain a deep sense of personal and family failure, and with these negative feelings a loss of self-confidence and self-respect. There are losses of not knowing where to turn or to whom to go for relief or what options are open to them. There are fears of what neighbors, friends and acquaintances will think of them.

I see the farm crisis as a kind of triple tragedy. First is the keen disappointment of the victims directly affected by events. Second are individuals, neighbors, friends and co-workers who, like myself, stand sympathetically by but do nothing to relieve even a single farm family's distress. Third is the sad fact that local congregations, conferences or interchurch agencies are unprepared to address the problem or bring even emergency relief to the distressed families.

It is embarrassing to think that farmers have always been generous contributors when there have been calls for beef, wheat and fruit to feed the hungry abroad. Now that there is a crisis among many of those same generous contributors, there is no one to rescue them. Neighbors and friends who would normally have helped rebuild their houses and barns if they had been destroyed by tornado, fire or flood now stand helplessly by. Even the many mutual aid societies, whose reason for existence is to help one another, throw up their hands and say, "We can't help because we're not organized for this purpose." The fact is that we're organized to respond to catastrophes due to natural causes but not catastrophes resulting from human failures.

It is unfortunate that the church in general is so poorly prepared to meet and minister to the many farm families in this agricultural crisis. However, there is no excuse for individual congregations, conferences and MCC not to get busy and do things that can logically be done. Is there any reason why local congregations should not create small (possibly three-member) mutual assistance committees to act in a congregation's behalf in some of the following ways: (1) Serve as an inquiring and listening group to those in financial distress. Clearly and forthrightly stating one's problems to a small group of trusted friends in confidence often results in better understanding of one's situation.

2. Provide a new perspective on the problem when considered from others' experience and viewpoint. (3) Make it feasible to explore alternative lines of action. (4) Make possible negotiation with creditors in a way individuals in debt could not. (5) Open the way to raise necessary temporary funds from within the church to help those in distress to reorganize their programs and continue to function on a modified scale.

Is there any good reason we should not establish a permanent organization for the express purpose of dealing with financial crises of church members? Are personal emotional crises and spiritual depressions not as worthy of helpful counsel as are stresses brought on by interpersonal conflicts or moral transgressions?

Economics and religion are closely related. Church members in financial crisis, for whatever reason, tend to be depressed and need help. They are not likely to be radiant Christians under such circumstances. Severely discouraged people need compassionate and skillful assistance. They need intercessory prayer and sympathetic understanding, but they also need to be told the truth in love about the need to practice financial self-discipline and resistance to the temptation of overspending. Many could also be taught the virtue of seeking and accepting spiritual counsel from respected fellow-believers.

The "Amen Farm" at Brooklin, Maine, has been a popular spot over the years. Today its name may carry a double message.

I do not view distressed farm families as reckless spenders or careless managers. I consider them victims of a fickle economic system. They are in the same situation as business people who fail when a major industry ceases operation or a line of merchandise is no longer demanded.

The church is primarily a helping agency. Its strength is in its caring, sharing, supporting and even suffering for one another. What else do vows taken at the time of baptism about remaining loyal to Christ and his church mean? There must be ways that God will show us to come to the aid of brothers and sisters in distress. None of us can long lift our heads if we only stand idly by or pass on the other side or, worse yet, fail to hear the cry for help.

J. Winfield Fretz, Box 126, North Newton, KS 67117, is a retired educator, sociologist, economist and churchman of many involvements.

Liberation theology: Can we take the positive without the negative?

Brian Epp

Liberation theology advocates that churches must be much more aggressive in being change agents for justice. Any theology has its strengths and its weaknesses, and there are differences of opinion among liberation theologians. We must accept the insights, obvious contributions and positive affirmations of the gospel.

We must also deal with theological weaknesses. Tony Campolo says in *A Reasonable Faith* that liberation theology fails in its hermeneutics. The Holy Spirit is not only transcultural but transclass. To confine the interpretation of Scripture under the direction of the Holy Spirit to any one social class is as erroneous as confining the interpretation of Scripture to any ethnic group. God transcends all classes. Unfortunately, liberation theologians limit the concept of oppression to the economic and political realm. But Jesus has come to deliver us from all forms of oppression.

Liberation theology also minimizes the positive place of suffering. Moses liberated Israel from Egypt, but the oppressed Israelite people still had 40 years of unjust torture and enslavement ahead of them. Oppression and tyranny—like sickness and suffering—may be part of God's disciplinary plan for his people. Luis Palau, a Latin American evangelist, spoke about the heart of a nation being corrupt. He said, "The world is experiencing a moral decline—low ethical standards and a high divorce rate. With the leisure structure of society, the family is being broken apart. . . . 72 percent of Latin America is illegitimate. That is why they don't enjoy a successful standard of living. There is a direct relationship between moral values and behavior and how a country goes, prosperity included. 'Your sins will find you out.' These actions set in motion the destruction of a nation. Men in Latin America between 35 and 40 years of age have usually had two or three wives and children by each one" (*on a James Dobson radio broadcast*).

That kind of looseness says there is no biblical value and no loyalty. It affects your attitude toward the family. Who are you going to be loyal to? What family? What father? What mother? "We will live for ourselves" is also typical of stepchildren in the United States.

Suffering is a consequence of how we live. There is a selfishness that leads to destruction. A low view of family is a low view of God. This does not lessen the wickedness of social injustice—nor does it support it. It recognizes that until Christ's return the tares and the wheat may grow up together and salvation must be measured in terms more enduring and wholistic than merely socioeconomic liberation.

> *". . . until Christ's return the tares and the wheat may grow up together and salvation must be measured in terms more enduring and wholistic than merely socioeconomic liberation."*

I look at William Wilberforce as a great social reformer (cf. *Real Christianity*). Wilberforce, barely over five feet tall, born in Hull, England, in 1759, struggled 40 years against slavery. He became a Member of Parliament at age 21. Sparked by a vacation and a debate with his old schoolmaster, Isaac Milner, he started to read the Bible daily. The seeds of change were planted. His concern for change began to show for scarcely noticed corruption of a year before. At that point Wilberforce sought out the counsel of John Newton, author of "Amazing Grace." Newton, once a slave trader and now a pastor, told him that the Lord raised him up to the good of the church and to the good of the nation.

Wilberforce in 1787 had this thought: "Had God seen fit to save him only for the eternal rescue of his own soul, or also to bring his light to the world around him?" True Christianity must save and serve. His objectives: "Almighty God has set before me the abolition of the slave trade and the reformation of manners."

Wilberforce presented a clear message of salvation and a call to Christians to holy living, as opposed to the lifeless religion commonly practiced. "All men must be regenerated by the grace of God before they are fit to be inhabitants of heaven, before they are possessed of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

Wilberforce understood the crucial interdependence of social reforms and spiritual movement. To attack social injustice while the heart of a nation remains corrupt is futile; to seek to reform the heart of a nation while injustice is tolerated ignores the lordship of Christ. On July 26, 1833, the bill for the abolition of slavery passed. Little more than a week later Wilberforce died.

Arnold Snyder writes in *Relevance of Anabaptist Non-Violence for Nicaragua Today*, "If we can take the crucial step of recognizing that the doing of justice in the wider world is not something God meant us to leave entirely in the hands of his divine providence, if we can see that God left a good part of the task in our human hands, we will find that we have been moved out of the possibility of complacency and passivity. Because if God calls on us to do justice in the wider world, and if we respond to his call and command, the only question that can remain will be the when and the how of doing justice. Has God also revealed the means and the methods of justice? The Anabaptist tradition maintains that the answer is yes, and the means and the method is revealed by the life of Jesus Christ, which is also the point of focus for Nicaraguan liberation theology."

As James has said, the words of Jesus can only be lived in the words and deeds of the believer—through each of us in the offices, homes, jobsites, fields and schools. May God give us wisdom in taking the positive and leaving the negative.

Brian Epp, youth pastor of Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, NE 68371, says "thanks" for the previous dialogue on liberation theology. He is interested now in taking it a step further. Your responses are welcome.

More than a matter of dirt

Art Meyer

Why save the family farm? There are many good reasons, but among the most important is that the family farm is best able to combat soil erosion and environmental degradation.

Those who live on family farms have traditionally placed high value on the family and the land. Other traditional values include good work habits, family unity, simplicity, honesty and self-reliance.

But family farms are being lost in dramatic numbers today. And topsoil is being lost just as dramatically. The Conservation Foundation reported last year that for every pound of food produced in the United States, 22 pounds of soil erodes. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) states that "loss of soil through erosion exceeds tolerable levels on 44 percent of U.S. cropland" and that soil erosion has reached epidemic proportions.

A Minnesota-based land ethics group, the Land Stewardship Project (LSP), reported one dramatic example of the relationship between the loss of the family farm and environmental degradation. In 1958 Ed Hauck of Wabasha County, Minn., bought a dairy farm. He put in terraces, hay strips, waterways and contours. By 1984 he had developed his farm into an award-winning conservation showplace. Soil erosion had been cut to less than three tons per acre per year, according to the Wabasha County Soil Conservation Service.

But in January 1985 Hauck was a victim of foreclosure. An insurance company took over the farm and rented it out to a cash grain farmer who plowed it up fence row to fence row, removing all terraces, waterways, strips and contours. Twenty-seven years of conservation work went down the drain. The Soil Conservation Service predicts an annual soil loss of 35 to 40 tons per acre per year, or a tenfold increase.

LSP, whose motto is, "Let's stop treating our soil like dirt," claims that the Hauck farm tragedy is not an isolated case. They point to similar cases in Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Wisconsin. More and more farmlands are being taken over by groups more interested in profit than in protection of soil and the environment.

Artist John Hapgood has prepared this portrait of a farm family facing an uncertain future. Art Meyer says that this uncertainty has a bearing upon good use of God's earth.

In many cases family farm loss by foreclosure correlates with soil loss by erosion. Some other facts about family farm loss include: (1) In 1929, 30 percent of the U.S. population resided on family farms; today that figure is 2.4 percent. (2) Ownership of farmland has become highly concentrated. One percent of farmland owners control over 30 percent of total acreage. (3) Thirty-five percent of all U.S. land is owned by non-farmers, 40 percent is rented, 10 percent is held by corporations.

Some U.S. farmland is held by insurance companies, and that amount is increasing as family farmers go bankrupt. The LSP claims that one insurance company owns 222,000 acres of farm and timberland in the United States. This is an area equal to one-third the size of Rhode Island.

As we seek ways to protect and preserve the soil, our Christian faith should motivate us to do all in our power to prevent further loss of family farms in our country and around the world.

Art Meyer formerly worked in the MCC U.S. Development Education Office.

MEDITATION

Ragged edges

Old and faded, the quilt, draped over a chest in an antique shop, drew me. The faded reds and blues, randomly patched, created a harmony of color and design. I contemplated buying it. It might look nice hanging on my bedroom wall. At closer inspection I noticed the threads hanging from the edging. Some of the triangular patches were torn and frayed. I didn't want to hang something in need of repair. I left the shop.

I couldn't forget the quilt. It gave me a feeling of comfort and peace. I could see its beauty in spite of its flaws.

I thought of myself. Many intricate parts pieced together to make me. God had created me. He had a perfect pattern, a perfect plan for my life, but some of the pieces of me had become torn and frayed. I was imperfect. I wanted to hide these pieces. No one should see them. They pronounced my failures.

I remembered the unfinished quilt carefully tucked away in my closet, the result of a class I'd taken several years ago. So many valid excuses for not finishing it, yet incomplete because I feared its imperfection.

Yes, I must have the old frayed quilt. I need to hang it on my wall to remind me that it's OK to be frayed and torn. It's OK to let the rough edges of imperfection show. It's this acceptance that frees me to finish the quilt in my closet. It's the acceptance of my whole self in God's forgiving presence that frees me to live.

Janice Friesen

Hospital of healing

Hospitals have always terrified me as places besieged by illness. People there were not so much on the road to recovery, I supposed, as lingering to die.

Imagine my dread, then, as I checked into the hospital last summer for exploratory abdominal surgery. While I dutifully answered the receptionist's questions about my age, health plan, etc., my imagination was conjuring means of escape. I had to force myself to breathe normally.

After the surgery, I became determined to get well. All my concentration focused on regaining my health. My mind, body and emotions concerted all their energies toward this one goal.

Whatever assistance I needed, whatever initiative I had to take, I didn't hesitate. All that cautiousness with which I reassured myself that I was a "nice," controlled adult became a luxury I just couldn't afford. I relinquished shyness and asked the nurse who brought me a bedpan how to use it. I even made the effort to request a *second* time some shampoo so I could wash my hair.

Such a gathering of myself into a commitment to healing was a spiritual experience. Ill as I was, I felt a wholeness, a "shalom." Shalom is the Hebrew word meaning peace, describing a life of harmony and fruitfulness. It is a life of creative power, a life that awakens us to God and attunes us to God's Spirit.

Our troubled world may be imagined as a hospital, its people diseased and waiting to die. But I've known a hospital to be a field ripe with a harvest of grace.

Amy Adelstein

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In 1970, Earl Butz, a former U.S. secretary of agriculture, was lecturing across the nation on "The Modernization of American Agriculture." He called for bigger farms, more machinery and less people on the land.

Today it seems a way of life—rural family farming—is dying. With this death is much agony. There is also the haunting feeling that somehow a strong link exists between land and people's welfare. Maybe Butz was wrong. Perhaps we are in danger of losing some of the essential and enduring qualities of human living.

The issue looks differently, when viewed psychologically and spiritually, than when it is viewed only statistically.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

God's account ledger

Many Christians are caught up in a narcotic, self-fulfillment gospel that offers justification for selfish behavior. Only severe crises seem able to shake people out of this sickness.

The farm crisis is one more illustration of this. Before high costs, interest rates and the low commodity prices lowered the boom on farmers, many of them—like many others—built up individualistic empires. Except for readily helping out fellow farmers suddenly taken ill, too many built up storage sheds, herds/flocks, equipment and acreage as if these were going out of style.

Farmers were never more guilty than the rest. Among those losing their farms are also many who tried to be faithful stewards of the earth (see feature articles for some of the problems).

Many people today don't seem to feel a sense of accountability. Churches join denominations but give their support grudgingly. People join churches but act as if they only want a ticket to the bleachers (How many choose the front seats in your church? How many volunteer to sit so far back at the ballgames?)

People operate on their own—a Lone Ranger kind of Christianity. Join the Mennonite church but forget Mennonite schools. Become part of a Mennonite conference but don't give to its support. If something displeases you, give your tithes to some seemingly eloquent and faultless TV preacher and program.

This is not biblical and not Christian. Certainly it's not Anabaptist or Mennonite.

The Bible repeatedly calls Christians to be an interdependent body (1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 5, Hebrews 10, Romans 12), accountable to God and to one another. We are to exercise corporate faithfulness to the Holy Spirit.

Community-centeredness should come naturally to Mennonites. Anabaptism started out as a community of committed believers, faithful to God and to one another unto death.

Our faith-centered community life gave way to becoming communities of relatives. That has become a plague among us. Newcomers find it difficult to break our sociological barriers.

But even more devastating is that we have grown into communities of independent individualists. Sociologically we still connect. Inwardly—psychologically and spiritually—we exercise private lives. We may live next door to people we know well and relate to socially, but on Sunday we're off in private directions. Each ignores the other. Even those who come to worship and study with us are not permitted inside our emotional and spiritual fences.

When crises come, as they will to most of us, we soon see the error of this Lone Ranger or Rambo Christianity. We need each other desperately. In biblical essence the church is a community of faith, living and learning together. This means giving account for and to one another. We are intertwined and find our essence only as we respect the total network of our connectedness. This includes the strangers who visit our churches and those who stay away. We need them and they need us.

I sense much pain in many GC congregations. It is like the pain in any kinship group, e.g. a broken family. We know one another but can't connect in helping and healing ways.

Such pain grows worse as long as we play the blame game. Independent individualistic faith blames anything that looks "social."

Our common mission in Christ begins with Christ in our lives and Christ in the lives of all other people. In him we are one—all over the world. We dare not begin with our pet and private prejudices.

Here we are all servants—unworthy at best—of God and his created world. Wholistic Christianity is a medicine needed desperately to heal today's world.

In God's account ledger, what are the debits we owe? Do the credits offset those debits?

No, we can never earn our salvation. But a genuine salvation works toward balancing all the debts we owe . . . through Jesus Christ. God's Word says, "On the day of judgment men will render account for every careless word" (Matthew 12:36). "So each of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

Abraham believed God and "it was *accounted* to him for righteousness" (Galatians 3:6, KJV).

In God's account ledger we must stand together by faith—for the world he loves and wants to save in Jesus Christ. The only alternative is to fail and fall—alone and lonely. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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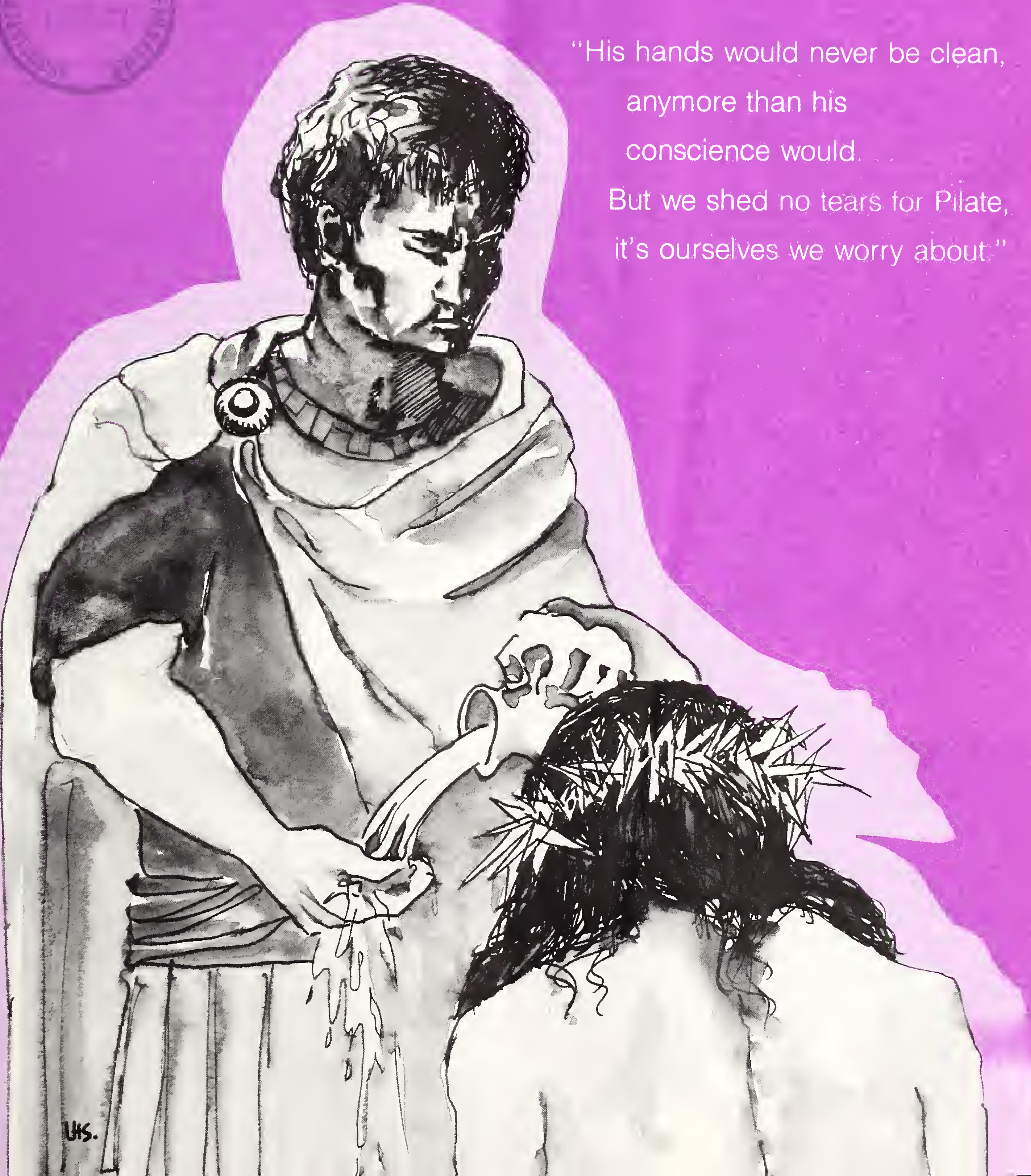


"His hands would never be clean,
anymore than his
conscience would.
But we shed no tears for Pilate,
it's ourselves we worry about."

Pontius Pilate and us . . .

Consider Pontius Pilate.

What we know of him isn't much. From Josephus, Jewish historian of the first century A.D., we learn that he served as Roman procurator of Judea during the years 26(?) - 36(?). His 10 years in office would indicate he did a reasonably good job; most of his predecessors and successors didn't last that long.

Josephus says that on one occasion Pilate used military force to put down a Jewish protest. It was this retaliation that stirred up enough furor to have him recalled to Rome.

It was not for these details that we remember Pilate. Our interest focuses on one day, a day that stands in the middle of time itself. We see a beaten, solitary figure standing before Pilate, and we wonder, What is going through Pilate's mind? Does he have any idea of who this Galilean rabbi is? Why did he make an attempt to set Jesus free? Was it because he was frightened by his wife's dream? Or was Pilate simply a pawn of fate?

We cannot know the answers to these questions, but each generation of Christians asks them. And there is a reason the questions keep getting asked, a reason rooted in the humanity we share with Pilate and the doubts we have about our decisions and the dreams that haunt our sleep. We wonder not because we care that much about Pilate but because we care about ourselves, and we wonder whether, at the last, we are not also a pawn of fate—of life itself.

There was no answer for Pilate either, if indeed he asked himself that question when Jesus stood in front of him with a ribbon or two of blood trickling down his bruised cheeks. But maybe Pilate didn't ask it then because he didn't know this Jew from Moses, and anyway, it was part of the unpleasantness of his job to head off trouble at the pass.

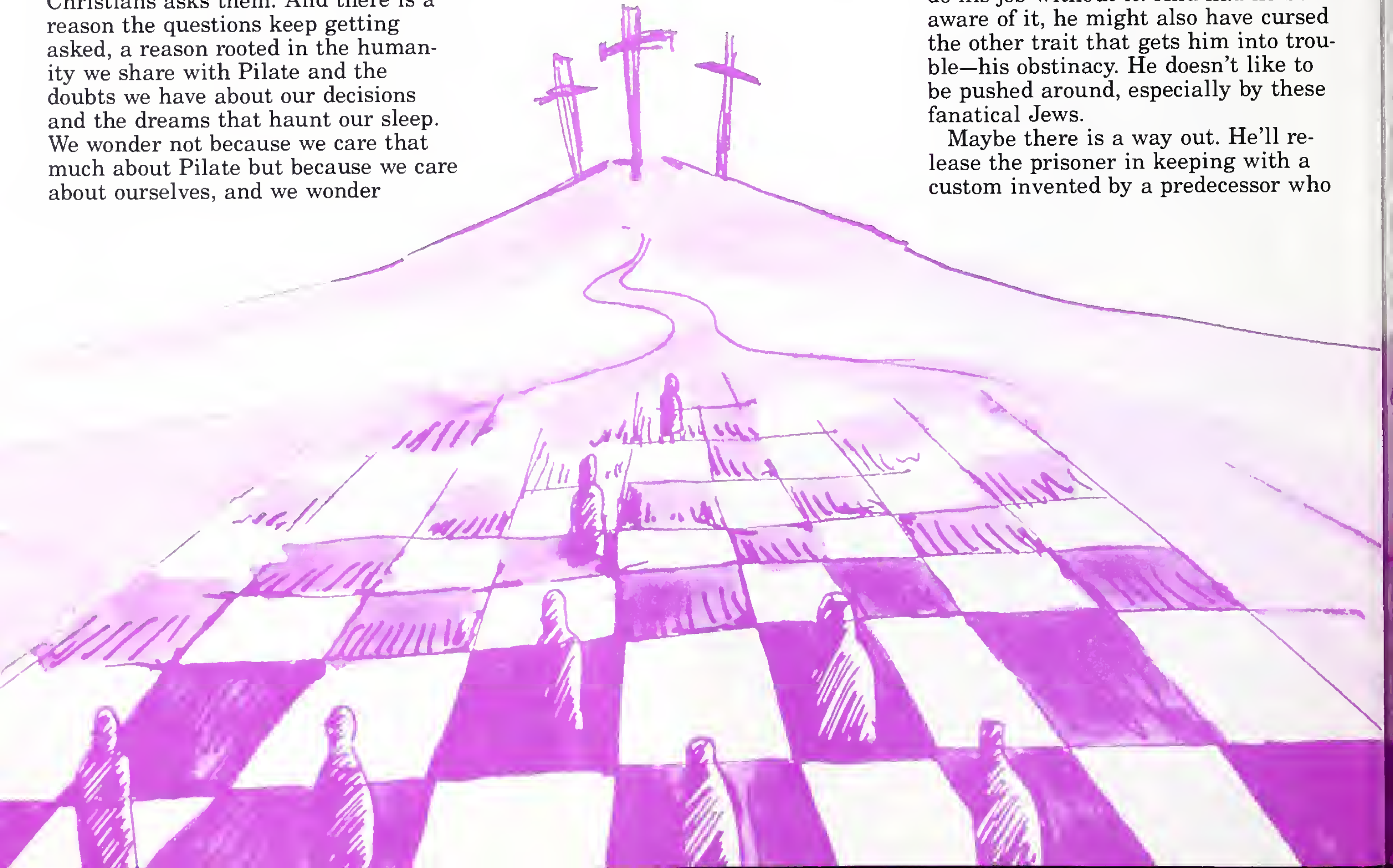
What Pilate can't figure out is why these Jews don't just settle down and let the Romans run the show for a while. Why do they insist on taking their religion so seriously? He looks at the silent prisoner who stands with his hands tied in front of him.

"Are you the king of the Jews?" Pilate says with an ill-concealed sneer. Silence. Pilate's stomach tightens and he notices, to his great disgust, that his voice sounds a little too shrill when he asks his next question. "Don't you *hear* what these . . . people . . . (he gestures with a contemptuous wave of his hand) are accusing you of?" The wretched figure in front of him sways on his feet ever so slightly but says not a word.

And now Pilate sees the whole thing, sees the ravenous look on the face of the accusers. He knows they want this up-country rabbi lynched, for heaven knows what reason, and that they won't take no for an answer. He sees too that their charges against him are a trumped-up hand and, what's more, they're holding all the aces. There's no one to speak on his behalf, and he won't say a word to defend himself.

For all his political moxie, Pilate is blessed, or cursed, with two traits that keep him from sleeping nights. One is a conscience. He is a Roman; he believes in law and justice. What's right is right. And what's wrong is dragging some poor soul in here who's had the bad judgment to make enemies of men who play for keeps. Pilate curses his Roman conscience; how much easier to do his job without it! And had he been aware of it, he might also have cursed the other trait that gets him into trouble—his obstinacy. He doesn't like to be pushed around, especially by these fanatical Jews.

Maybe there is a way out. He'll release the prisoner in keeping with a custom invented by a predecessor who



Kenneth L. Gibble

had a good eye for public relations. But it doesn't work; the growing mob insists on their option. Release the murderous radical Barabbas instead of Jesus. And now Pilate feels the perspiration gathering on his upper lip. Things are getting tight. And a voice inside his head asks at last, "Why me?" Or maybe the voice is saying, "Woe is me," which, when you think about it, is pretty much the same thing, one way or the other.

One way or the other is exactly the choice he has, Pilate knows. One way is to play it smart, to do the expedient thing, let them have their pound of flesh from this Galilean nobody who'll be forgotten inside of three weeks. No skin off my back, Pilate tells himself. It is an unfortunate choice of imagery, for it reminds him of the sounds of flogging he had heard not long before. Pilate looks again at the man whose life rests in his hands.

The other way, defy these jackals in the name of conscience or obstinacy, do the right thing, save the prisoner's neck and maybe his own soul in the bargain. The price: quite possibly recall to Rome to face disgrace.

Half to himself, half to those who stand waiting, Pilate asks, "What shall I do with this Jesus?" The answer storms his ears, "Let him be crucified."

So Pilate makes his decision. And the question comes again. Was Pilate a victim of the times, the circumstances, a pawn of fate? Or doesn't that plea hold up? Was he, rather, a man who chose wrongly? Take your pick—it's one way or the other.

But before you choose, take one final look at the Roman procurator. See Pilate standing in front of the crowd. He has called for water, and as it is poured out, he washes his hands and cries, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." And now, look away quickly, for it is an embarrassing sight. Such a pathetic, futile gesture. Of course, Pilate could not know he would be remembered thus through the ages. And if he really believed he had no choice in the matter, then why the water and why the washing of hands?

Deep down Pilate knew it was no good. His hands would never be clean, anymore than his conscience would. And at night, wakened by one of his wife's bad dreams, Pilate could see that forlorn figure standing in front of him again. And Pilate knew there were choices that could never be unmade. The death of Jesus was not dependent on Pontius Pilate. In fact, the death Pilate caused was not our Lord's death; it was his own death, his own soul's death.

Today we shed no tears for Pilate. It's ourselves we worry about. We ask, How free am I? My body, with its limitations and its susceptibility to heart disease or high blood pressure or cancer, is determined by heredity. My psyche has been conditioned by the way my parents treated me in my early years. I am controlled by economics, by politicians, by half a hundred other factors I am helpless to change. I am Victim. I am Pawn.

That is one way to think of it.

But there is the other way. It means acknowledging certain undeniable limitations we face but nevertheless accepting the burden of human freedom. It means hearing the beat of a different drummer and marching to it. It means making choices, even when the right answers are far from clear. It may mean accepting the role, not of procurator but of the crucified. It means recognizing that some decisions mean we can't go back again.

It's true that part of life is what happens to us. But the other part is also true. To some extent we become what we choose to become. It's faith that saves us in the end. Faith that our choices are not just leaps into the dark but into the everlasting arms. It is faith that teaches us we were destined to be more than victims, more than pawns, nothing less than free men and free women. And it is faith too that assures us that Christ himself made the free choice to come to us in love and that in this coming God was present and is present, reconciling the world to God.

We call that divine choice "grace," and without it there wouldn't be much point to the whole thing. •

one way or the other

"We are destined to be more than victims, more than pawns. . . . Christ himself made the free choice to come to us in love. . . ."

Grieving our way into hope

Joyce Shutt

"We have to grieve our way into hope." She was talking about facing nuclear war, but I heard it as a truism that applied to everything in life. Faced with the painful—the unthinkable—we have to grieve our way into hope.

My mother is doing that in the wake of my father's death. A friend is doing that following her divorce. My husband is doing that as he grapples with the crippling effects of rheumatoid arthritis. They are grieving their way into acceptance, into hope for a future without the familiar and desirable. Each is learning to value his or her pain, for to deny themselves the purging their grief allows is to deny themselves healing. Grieving is the fundamental way we move from pain, disappointment, hurt and fear to openness and hope.

Elizabeth Kübler-Ross has worked with terminally ill patients and their families. She has found that most of us go through five distinct stages of grief if we are to find emotional and spiritual health. These stages are denial, bargaining, anger, depression and finally acceptance. She has also found that unless an individual grapples with the appropriate feelings and responses connected with each stage, they tend to become "blocked." They cannot move on to a peaceful state of acceptance and hope.

Hope does not imply easy answers and solutions, as a friend who is alcoholic, divorced and frequently depressed is discovering. For her, as for all of us, hope is that which enables her to face whatever lies ahead with openness to possibility, with a fragile yet real spirit of anticipation and expectation of a better tomorrow even in the face of hardships and limitations. Hope is the quiet trust and acceptance of what is and must be, after all of our attempts to deny, rage, bargain and blot out the pain. Hope is the ability to face head on what must be faced without bowing in self-hatred or defeat. Hope does not come easily, for it is never easy to grieve.

Grief is the essential process of mourning for what might have been as well as for what is and will be. As long as we deny or argue against life, as long as we withhold and hide our true feelings and responses, fears and struggles, as long as we hang on to our broken, damaged pasts in a futile attempt to give our stories validity, we prevent the things for which we long from happening.

Jesus said, "Whoever would save his soul shall lose it," meaning that as long as we enclose, deny or isolate our true responses and feelings, we will lose our spiritual moorings precisely because our soul and personality is alive only to the degree to which we are authentically involved with life. When we don't withdraw or shrink from pain and self-knowledge but can grieve for ourselves and others, we can move on. As long as we think that grief is not a healthy or appropriate response to pain, we will put our energy into a misguided attempt to be

Jesus

Menno Wiebe

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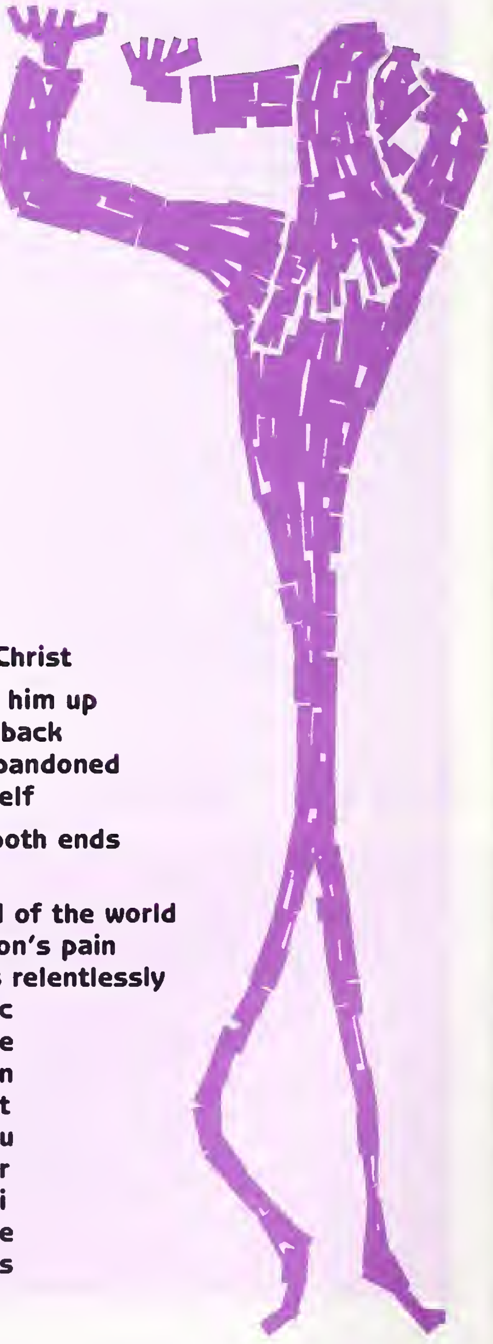


falsely strong. For when we refuse to grieve, to mourn for ourselves, we become blocked. We tie ourselves into tight knots by insisting that we, others and events follow certain patterns, respond in specific, prescribed ways. Instead we must learn to value what we feel, to move into that feeling and to learn what it is trying to tell us about ourselves and life. That's what Jesus is trying to tell us about not trying to save ourselves from pain.

Hope, contrary to our expectations, does not necessarily imply a happy ending. Hope rather provides us with the comfort that comes in acceptance, the peace that defies our human understanding. As with the terminally ill who, when they stop fighting the reality of their impending death and instead focus on the joy and presence of the moments they still have left, find life more beautiful than ever before.

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," Jesus said. There is no comfort unless we can literally cry our guts out. Perhaps the greatest flaw in the American approach to life, as exemplified in the arms race and other areas of international and domestic affairs, is that most Americans do not see their pro-profit, pro-military and anti-people choices as a cause for mourning, repentance and grief. By refusing to acknowledge the connections between the arms race and dependence on military might with the national deficit, unemployment, the worldwide economy and the spread of communism and revolution in the rest of the world, they are blocked from grieving their way into hope and new positions of understanding and strength.

Each year on Palm Sunday, Christians celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We Christians make that a festive occasion. But if we read the Gospel accounts carefully, we sense that for Jesus this entry was a time for grieving his way into hope as he faced his impending crucifixion. The apocalyptic message is that in spite of everything, the ultimate triumph of hope is that we can anticipate the future even in the face of all that is truly hopeless. Life is not limited to our individual experiences and perceptions. The power of our emotions and our ability to feel and to embrace the pain of life somehow impacts on all of life and somehow saves us from evil and insanity. To lose our life in order to save it goes far beyond our individual experiences. It also applies to how we impact on others and they on us. Hope comes as we realize that what we sacrifice or give up is never wasted. Hope comes as we comprehend that our loss does not really impoverish us, for what we are really giving up are our desires, our greeds, our lust for power and self-destruction. Hope comes as we sense that true freedom involves letting go of that which now seems most precious and safe.

When we examine the Gospel accounts of the Passion Week we discover several images of Jesus grieving his way toward hope. Luke records a dramatic picture of Jesus weeping as he rides into Jerusalem. At various times that week we see Jesus struggling with the various stages of grief—lashing out in anger during the cleansing of the temple, being depressed as he speaks of the end times, bargaining with God in the Garden of Gethsemane as he begs God to remove the cup from him, being bitter with disappointment over the disciples' failure to stay awake and support him, crying out in despair from the cross. Yet by facing up to what he was truly experiencing instead of denying his feelings, by grieving for what lay ahead and the cost it would have for him, he found the comfort he sought and the courage that carried him through.

So it is with us. We find the strength we need when we face up to the sin, pain and failure of our individual and corporate lives. We must learn to confront the dark side of ourselves, to admit the true state of our motives: the church's and the world's with all of their combined injustices and forms of oppression, if we are to find a way out of the escalating madness and blindness of vision which now corrupts our religious, personal and political systems everywhere. Busy denying the many ways we work against ourselves and block the very things we covet most, we are prevented from enjoying the fruits of our labors and spirits.

Many of us are angry with God. We are disappointed and hurt because we want Jesus to save us from the things we fear, from the consequences of our selfishness, anxiety, mean spirits, national policy and personal choices. We want to be greedy and selfish without hurting others in the Third World; we want to spend money irresponsibly without creating a budget deficit. John's account of Jesus' last visit to Mary and Martha is instructive in this way. Mary pours an expensive perfume on Jesus' feet, but Judas reacts in anger, claiming the perfume should have been sold to feed the poor. But John says of Judas, "He said this not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief; he carried the money bag and would help himself" (John 12:6). Judas liked handling money. It made him feel important. He liked money for what it did for him. Like Judas, most of us judge and criticize others because we ourselves feel threatened, not because we are concerned about them and what they are doing. But because it is so hard for us to face our true motives, we have a great ability to blame others or to rationalize what we are really doing. We say, for instance, that we are concerned about Central America, South Africa, Ethiopia, but our real concerns lie with protecting our own jobs or standards of living, our egos and our pride. We say we are concerned about church purity and correctness of biblical interpretation, but rarely are those the real issues.

My guess is that if we could really let go and be honest, all church schisms, disagreements and conflict situations rise from the poisoned wells of self-interest and our unwillingness to confront and admit the true nature of our thoughts, feelings and actions. Caught in our sin, we feel hopeless and afraid. Afraid to admit we are afraid. Afraid to admit we might be wrong. Afraid of what God might ask us to give up. Afraid to grieve, for we know deep within the core of our being that Jesus will not protect us from the consequences of our actions, that Jesus came only to provide us with the way, not to walk it for us.

Yet that is enough. It is enough that Jesus came to provide us with a way instead of walking it for us—when we are willing to grieve our way into the comfort, hope and the acceptance he offers. Once we come to terms with our childish desire to be protected and cared for, the inadequacy of our belief systems and doctrines of faith, Jesus shows us the way. It is the way of the cross—the way of letting go and letting God, the way of losing to win.

So I beg you to grieve. Grieve for the time we have lost as a church, for the mistakes we have made, for the false gods we are worshiping. Grieve for yourself, your broken life and fears and anxieties, for your disappointments and failures. Like the people of Nineveh, let us put on sackcloth and ashes and repent for our sins. For our God redeems and transcends our broken pasts and fragmented lives. Let us dare to grieve our way into God's hope. •

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Dollars and retirement security

Calvin Redekop

I have a friend who often talked and thought about retirement when we were together in college. I used to laugh at him.

His concerns may not have been so crazy after all. A recent report on retirement states that an adequate financial security for retirement should be a capital base large enough to supply half of your highest annual preretirement salary. At 10 percent interest, this would amount to a kitty five times your annual salary at its highest. (Ironically, my friend did not reach that base. He has retired but is working at odd jobs to make ends meet.)

What is enough for a secure retirement? If an adequate retirement means a lot of money, those who are still quite young had better start working on this right away. A friend, an administrative officer at a major university where I studied, used to say, "An adequate financial position or status at any point in life is always at least 20 percent more than you have access to."

Clearly, the financial figure depends upon a lot of factors: (1) Your health in retirement years. If you are going to be a wiry and feisty 93 when you die, that is one thing, but a long and sickly dependency is another. (2) Your style of life. How much money do you need to spend in order to feel good? For some this means a fifth-wheel RV and four-wheel drive pickup or a trip to Hawaii every year, while others get driven into ecstasy with a daily round of horseshoes. (3) Your friends' expectations. How much do you need to spend on your friends to make them feel good? What if you can't afford to take your turn at paying at an expensive restaurant every Friday evening? (4) Your bodily needs. This sounds like a repeat of #1, but it is not. Your friends' style of life and expectations can affect *your* bodies. Some of our bodies need to be in a warm climate, preferably in Arizona or Florida, especially in the winter, or we need the dry air of the southwest, or we need to be near a golf course in Palm Springs at a time approaching age 65. If our friends did not have these needs, our bodies probably wouldn't demand them either. (5) Your actual survival needs. How much food, clothing and shelter will you need as you age? After 22, the needed calorie intake declines and, as we get older, our wrinkles can cover much of our bodies where clothes were necessary before.

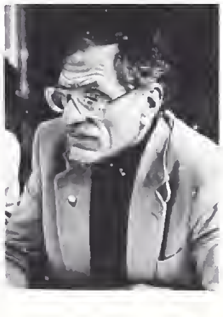
With all these variations it is difficult to get much closer to an actual figure. The secure nest egg will vary tremendously, depending upon the individual or couple in question.

There is no way you can adequately prepare for a secure retirement, financially or otherwise. If you had a million bucks but had a stroke at 66, your dividends would not bring you back your speech or buy the loving devotion of a nurse who might have to take care of you for another 16 years. Or if you died on your 66th, you would not get too much joy out of clipping coupons in heaven in light of all the more exciting things to do there. Or if you had barely enough to live on but had little more to do than eat the turnips your wife had prepared and watch TV day after day, more money would not help much. So financial security is no solution and in itself no security for retirement.

The best retirement security plan (not amount) I can think of includes the following: (1) Keep in good general health so that your body will get you into the promised land of retirement. Only then will you have reason to worry about retirement now. (2) Think of something to do *if* you make it to retirement, because if you had a million or so then, you may not have enough time to decide what you would do with it. And your poor cousins' advice might be a bit skewed. (3) Live in a socialist country, where there is a social security net that will take care of you. If you, for example, have a stroke at 40 or lose your memory and walk away from your family in a capitalist society, things will be a bit more severe. I know of cases of each of these and I am sure you do too. (4) Begin early to build some solid relationships with a spouse, several children or friends (maybe even with a congregation) so that they will take care of you under any contingency or disaster that might befall you. Thus, if you have coupons to clip from stocks, but lose your memory and forget how to sign your name, they can help you. Or if you have gone bankrupt during the last three recessions, any one of the groups named above may provide a closet and potato chips until the trumpet calls.

This may seem contrary to all the literature and public media propaganda which have urged us all to start thinking of retirement early and to plan for retirement now. Most of these messages have your welfare at heart, of course. Or do they? Not quite, for I argue that no one can predict what will happen. We need to take a different tack. And Jesus said something about not worrying too much about tomorrow. Making and keeping the strong bonds with loving and caring children, relatives and church friends is the best planning for a secure age in any world—capitalist, socialist or Christian. I am trying this tack with my children, but they occasionally hold me hostage. In a recent argument over who would wash the dishes, one of my sons responded, "Dad, if you don't wash those dishes, I will not give you that bunk I was saving for you."

Of course, my feeling is it might be better not to have a large legacy. Then it will never be used for blackmail.



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It is possible to retire with dign

The Lord is like an enemy (Lamentations 2)

Monty Ledford

This chapter is bad news for a preacher. It portrays our greatest sin: the sin of pleasing people and not God. The judgment on Israel could have been averted if prophets had chosen to "expose sin to ward off captivity" (v. 14), but they did not. No time has been worse than ours for this temptation, and few churches are more susceptible to requiring false and worthless prophets than Mennonites. Why? Well, we Anabaptists wish always to operate on the basis of consensus, not adversarial pastoral/congregational models. We are so concerned to be servants that we confuse promoting someone's good with meeting his or her expectations. We are so dependent upon the goodwill of people for our effectiveness in ministry that we dare not get them to dislike us. Our culture drums into us the need to enhance people's self-esteem so much that we are scared to rebuke anybody. And last, the rebuker draws a salary from the rebukee. ("Whatever you say, pastor, don't get the treasurer mad.") All this makes for tremendous pressure to say what people want to hear. The ancient prophets succumbed, and with terrible consequences.

Awful scenes of judgment appear in the writer's mind: the shouts of the ancient, thrice-yearly worshiping crowds are gone forever; instead there is the searing memory of enemy soldiers roaring in the holy place (v. 7); the wasted little children whimpering their last breath as they die, one by one, in their mothers' helpless arms (vv. 11, 12); and the ultimate, mind-repelling horror: "Should women eat their offspring, the children they have cared for?" (v. 20). The results of sin are terrible. Pastors, let us vow to speak the word of God whether it is pleasant or not. Those hard words may save souls from awful punishment. Lay people, ask yourselves, "Is my dislike for my pastor due to the fact that he or she speaks unwelcome truth?" The stakes are too high for us to cultivate popularity.

And yet . . . and yet . . . isn't this punishment too much? the writer asks. Granted we sinned and deserved punishment, but is it really like God to "swallow up without pity" (v. 2)? These last two words lead us to the brink of our theology. We peer over and shudder at the awful depths of an angry God's wrath. For, make no mistake about it, this is the Lord's doing.

Oh, I know, I know, some Mennonite teachers insist that God cannot be the source of misery, that he simply allows the natural results of our sin to work itself out. That he is, in fact, truly non-resistant in his heroic and painful decision to let us burn ourselves on the stove of cause and effect. It is the devil who causes pain. All true, but not the whole story.

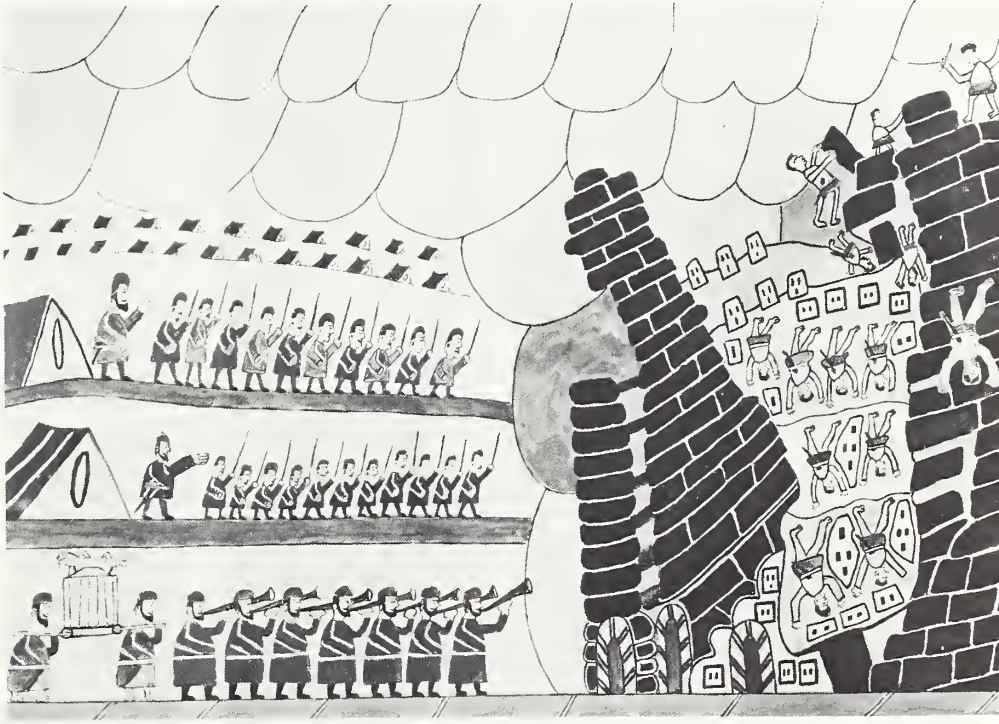
The consuming, overwhelming attacker (vv. 1-8) can hardly be characterized as non-resistant. God is the subject of all these lines. His opposition to sinners is as active as it is terrifying. Ezekiel spoke the same dread truth: "The Lord says, 'I am against you. I will draw my sword from its scabbard and cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked' " (Ezekiel 21:3). There is a hard and terrifying side of God which is as much part of the Bible as his gentleness and kindness. We dare not neglect it because we can't fit it into our theology. Above all, we dare not misrepresent the character of God to those who must one day meet him face to face.

What are we to do in the presence of such a God? Here the true heart of our writer comes out. What are we to do? Flee his face? No. That seems natural, but it is the response of the damned (Revelation 6:15-17). Strange as it may seem, we are to flee to him. He is terrible in wrath, but he is our only hope. The writer calls to his devastated people, "Arise! Cry out in the night . . . pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord" (v. 19). The desperate determination to deal with God face to face in spite of the horror leads the writer to the truly amazing breakthrough of chapter three, which is so different from the other chapters and might almost be entitled, with Luther, "How can I find a gracious God?"

Third in a series on Lamentations

Monty Ledford, 11 Dean N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505, is pastor at the North Park Mennonite Church.

God comes among us also in judgment. This painting by Israeli artist Shalom of Safed is titled "The Falling Walls of Jericho." Jericho was visited by judgment.



My Easter came a little late

Marlene J. Bagnull

My voice trembled as I sang the old familiar hymn, "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today." Around me faces were glowing with Easter joy, but my heart felt empty.

"Raise your joys and triumphs high," the congregation crescendoed, but I choked on the words as a tear slipped down my cheek. How could I celebrate the victory of Easter when my life was so filled with disappointment and defeat?

The pastor's message was about hope, but I didn't hear his words. All I heard was an inner voice telling me it was too risky to keep hoping for miracles that never come. And somewhere during the service I made the decision to give up—to withdraw from God and others because it hurt too much to keep reaching and believing.

"You can't live without hope," a wise friend reminded me when I unintentionally revealed my feelings several days later. "The Bible says, 'No one who believes in Christ will ever be disappointed' " (Romans 10:11, TLB).

The pastor's message was about hope, but I didn't hear his words.

Hours later I was still struggling with my reaction to her words. "I don't need pat religious answers. I need help." I felt like screaming at her and God. Then I felt guilt and remorse. I had loved and served the Lord all my adult life. I didn't want to deny him now. Yet how was I to balance life's reality with the promises of the Bible?

I thought of Jesus' words to his disciples the night before he went to the cross. He told them they would go on to accomplish greater things than he had done (John 14:12). He promised the Holy Spirit would come and lead them into all truth (John 14:17).

But what was truth for them and for me?

Opening my Bible, I read Jesus' final words, "I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, TLB).

I thought of the early Christians. They did the miracles Jesus had done and even greater ones. In his name they healed the sick and restored the dead to life. They preached the gospel to the ends of the earth as they knew it. Centuries later their words, as they have been recorded and preserved in the New Testament, continue to touch and change lives.

But the early Christians also knew the reality of trials and sorrows. I wondered if the joy of the resurrection faded for them when, like the Master, some of them were nailed to their own crosses? And what were the feelings of those who were beaten to death or beheaded or thrown to the lions?

In his second letter to the Corinthian Christians Paul writes about the "suffering and hardship and trouble of every kind" he endured. He had been "beaten, put in jail, faced angry mobs, worked to exhaustion, stayed awake through sleepless nights of watching, and gone without food" (2 Corinthians 6:4-5, TLB).

None of these things would make an attractive help wanted ad for Christian workers. Yet Paul went on to say that "our hearts ache, but at the same time we have the joy of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 6:10, TLB). This apostle, who suffered much for the cause of Christ, wrote the words my Christian friend had reminded me of: "No one who believes in Christ will ever be disappointed" (Romans 10:11, TLB).

"Lord, how could he be so strong?" I asked as I continued to flip through the pages of my Bible. Then the word "but" jumped off the page in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, (TLB): "We are pressed on every side by trouble, *but* not crushed and broken. We are perplexed because we don't know why things happen as they do, *but* we don't give up and quit. We are hunted down, *but* God never abandons us. We get knocked down, *but* we get up again and keep going" (italics mine).

Suddenly it dawned on me that I had a choice. I could continue to nurse "Why me?" feelings of self-pity, or I could remember that Christ never promised it would be easy to follow him. I could also choose to claim his peace and joy available for the asking—his peace and joy that could bring victory within regardless of defeating circumstances without.

Easter came late for me, but the following Sunday when I stood to sing hymns of praise in morning worship, tears of joy spilled down my cheeks.

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Good Friday revisited

James E. Tomlonson

A young man I know came to my office on Good Friday morning. He greeted me, then hurriedly explained he was at risk with the law. He wanted me to know that his presence at the church might jeopardize my own legal status. I said he was welcome to stay.

He had broken his federal probation, and federal marshals were wanting to pick him up. He spent the morning in my office writing and in our sanctuary praying and meditating. At about 11 a.m. he asked if I might be willing to transport him to a nearby state park where he was slated to meet some friends. Without really giving it a second thought, I said yes.

On the way he said he did not want to place me in jeopardy for his beliefs. We agreed that if we were stopped en route by the federal marshals, I would simply say that I was taking him to meet the marshals. He did not want to inflict his beliefs nor his encounter with the authorities upon me. I indicated that I realized the danger, yet I supported him in his peacemaking witness to his faith.

You see, today he was on his way to be part of a presence at the gate of a local air force base. It was on this day a year ago that he had broken the law by crossing over the line into the base as part of a Good Friday protest against the deployment of nuclear missiles.

When we were about halfway to the park, a car with two federal marshals passed us at a high rate of speed. (He remembered one of them from a prior encounter.) It was his hope to arrive at the park and to spend some time with his friends before the arrest. He spoke of the arrest, remarking that he wanted it on Good Friday. It had deep religious significance for him and it became that for me as well.

We entered the park and drove to the place where his friends had agreed to meet. They were already gathered. As we entered the area, he spoke over and over again to himself, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for theirs is the presence of God." We greeted one another and had just begun to exchange some of his personal belongings when, out of nowhere, a car approached and two men in suits got out. He remarked, "They're here and I am ready."

What happened next was almost like a dream. One man quickly came forward with his hand on his belt. The second man called out, "Are you _____ ?" My friend replied quietly, "Yes, I am." The marshal asked him to approach their car, where he spoke to him in low tones. The second man searched him and returned to him all his personal items, including a *Good News Bible*.

As they placed him in the car, someone in the group began to sing softly and others joined in. As they drove away, we all waved. He could not return the wave for he had his hands behind him in handcuffs.

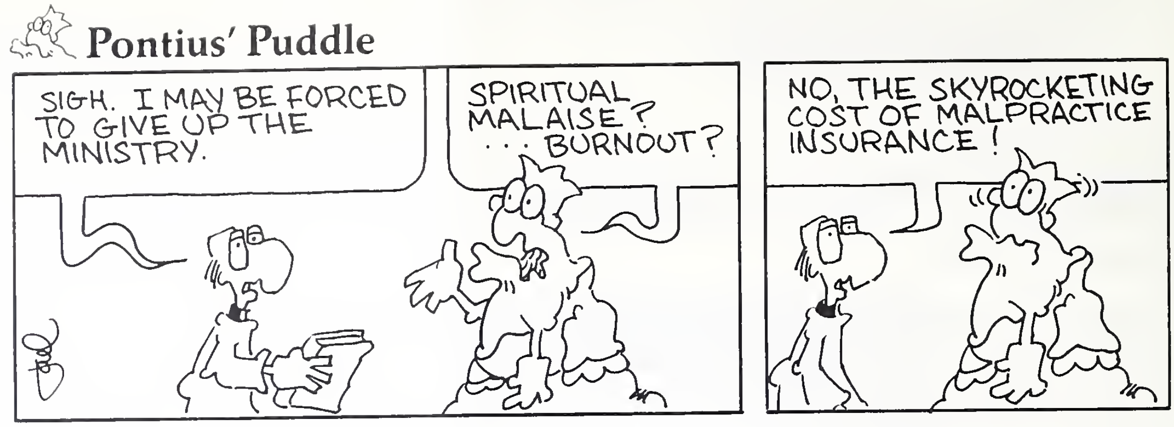
We don't know where the "kiss" came from, but we suspect someone was in the nearby woods waiting for my car to arrive and gave the signal.

The Bible tells of another who also came to "a park" to be with his friends. There he was arrested and led off by the soldiers. For me, my experience lifted the words right off the pages of my Bible. Those words became flesh as my friend was led off to prison.

You and I know people within our daily routines who continue to be led off to prison and, for some, even to death. They have spoken of their faith to a world that is not ready to hear the news of peace, justice and the desire to live in a peaceful world. Will we listen to their witness? Will we hear their plight? Or will we continue to live as if God's Word will not break into our lives?

James E. Tomlonson, Route 5, Box 950, Warrensburg, MO 64093, is pastor of the Church of the Brethren there. He writes about Good Friday two years ago.

The twisted paths of human loyalties can be symbolized by this stretch of railway track.


Pontius' Puddle
SIGH. I MAY BE FORCED TO GIVE UP THE MINISTRY.
SPIRITUAL MALAISE? ... BURNOUT?
NO, THE SKYROCKETING COST OF MALPRACTICE INSURANCE!
86-15

NEWS

Sexuality resolution debated

GB proposes 'evangelize' as overarching goal

Newton, Kan.—"Come back and tell me everything that's happening in the General Conference," 96-year-old Peter A. Warkentine instructed his daughter Anne Warkentine Dyck when she left Saskatchewan to come to Council of Commissions here. (She is Women in Mission adviser for her province.)

"What's happening" emerges in six categories: General Board, Commissions on Education, Home Ministries and Overseas Mission, the Division of Administration and Women in Mission.

General Board

Anybody attending the first full day of General Board sessions held here Feb. 27-March 4 could have thought they were in a writers' workshop. At their previous meeting General Board members had organized themselves into four small groups. Each was to write out the meaning of one of the four basic long-range goals for General Conference: (1) evangelize, (2) teach vital and meaningful biblical principles, (3) develop and train leadership, (4) seek to achieve Christian unity.

When these goals were shared at the meetings, GB members learned what every writer has to learn: prewrite, write, rewrite, rewrite, rewrite. . . . It seemed tedious and tough at times, but in the end there was a consensus on what these goals mean. Carol Suter, GC development director, commented, "The first step in development is a clear formulation of our mission. Without such an exercise you can forget about long-range planning, whether it's missions or fund raising."

Later the board agreed to make "evangelize" their priority for at least the next triennium, since all four goals cannot be given full attention at one time. Teaching biblical principles, training leadership and achieving unity will of course be needed to support evangelism, said one GB member, but the emphasis of projects will be on evangelism and church planting. All of this depends on the approval of delegates at Saskatoon, Suter said.

The exercise was similar when the GB looked at a proposed draft of the resolution on human sexuality to be brought before the Saskatoon triennial conference in July. There was much debate and then a series of rewrites. Loretta Fast expressed concern that a statement not be used to exclude homosexual Mennonites or their parents. Don Steelberg objected to any resolution because it may encourage more people to ignore the study process. Jake Harms countered, a resolution can state where we are at this point.

Anna Juhnke raised another issue. "If homosexual practice is not acceptable because of the importance of the marriage covenant, then to be consistent we must condemn divorce." Irene Dunn pointed out that we think about divorce differently since it has touched nearly all our lives. But Duane Heffelbower said there's a qualitative difference, since divorce does not continue. In the end a resolution was written to be presented to delegates at Saskatoon, and it passed by a vote of 11 to 3.

Jake Tilitzky, GC president, expressed gratitude to God and to the whole conference for the 1985 "hallelujah" budget results: 101.9 percent. It was the first time budget goals were met since 1980. Guidelines for 1986 are a 4 percent increase over the 1985 budget, or $5,624,320. Staff salaries are to be raised 3 percent in keeping with inflation.

Reflecting positively on the 1984 Dialogue on Faith and the 1985 Dialogue on Biblical Interpretation, GB decided to not continue this series for now. They will urge regional conferences to continue the process in their own ways.

Vern Preheim, GC general secretary, reported his participation in a group of "Christian Leaders for Responsible TV." The GB endorsed his ongoing involvement. Steelberg said, "I'm in favor, but I wish we could also endorse other groups, like the National Council of Churches, in similar projects to work for decency."

The board agreed to a Division of Administration proposal on the redistribution of funds. From now on, all undesignated contributions will go where most needed. This will have a leveling effect on the percentages of its budget each commission makes.

In other business the board:

- reviewed the work of Mennonite Mutual Aid, then later agreed to eliminate reporting of MMA to General Board, since it already reports to the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and can report to the U.S. Council;
- passed a motion brought by CHM U.S. that GB reverse its recommen-

A retreat for parents and adult siblings of homosexually oriented people will be held June 13-15 at the International House of Friendship in Winona Lake, Ind. This retreat will provide a context for people to share their experiences, to deal with personal feelings of pain and guilt, and to discuss the homosexuality issue with each other. The retreat is sponsored by the Mennonite Church. For more information and registration materials, contact Lavon Welty, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515, (219) 294-7536.

Around 250-300 people packed the new Taguatinga Mennonite Church in Brazil one Sunday evening in December to see the film "Jesus." Eleven people made decisions that night, so the members have been busy visiting these new Christians. On Sunday, Dec. 22, 1985, the Campinas Church had a baptismal service. Four people were baptized in a tank which had recently been dug and built outside the kitchen door. It was a meaningful experience, especially as pastor Joao Moraes baptized his mother.

Registration forms for the triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church have been mailed to its member congregations. The conference theme, "Thy Kingdom Come," will be the focus of the sessions to be held July 21-27 in Saskatoon. Registrations will be processed after April 1, at which time originals will be returned as confirmation.

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dation to Mennonite Central Committee that it continue to withhold taxes from its employees even when they request otherwise;

- responded with regret to Ebenezer Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, which had voted to withdraw from the conference.

Commission on Education

Most of the meeting time of the Commission on Education was spent in closed session to discuss staff matters. From this nothing has yet been reported except that executive secretary J. W. Sprunger has resigned, effective Jan. 31, 1987, and that Randy and Myrna Krehbiel, secretaries for family life education, were not reappointed.

COE agreed to participate in a new Foundation Series curriculum for adults, 18 quarters of material to be ready for use in congregations by 1990. Chairman Fred Unruh called it "a historic occasion."

New computer equipment has allowed book editing to proceed much more quickly than before, general editor Maynard Shelly reported. He said he hopes to put out "a book a month" in the coming year.

Just published by Faith and Life Press, the publishing arm of COE, is *Young or Old or In Between* by Bertha Harder. Due out by this summer is *Encircled*, stories of Mennonite women, edited by Ruth Unrau. FLP again did over $1 million of business.

Foundation Series resource people, representing every provincial and district conference, met the day before the commission meetings with Rosella Wiens Regier, secretary for children's education.

Mennonite Service Venture is a new inter-Mennonite (MC-GC) track for conference youth work. Paula Diller Lehman, secretary for youth education, described it thus: Individuals interested in summer service (in a variety of locations) may apply to Youth Venture, while whole groups (youth fellowships) may be assigned to a summer experience through Group Venture.

COE in session

Twelve Mennonite Marriage Encounters were held during the last season, which roughly coincides with the school year. Randy and Myrna Krehbiel reported that all were full and half of them had waiting lists.

Commission on Home Ministries

The Commission on Home Ministries heard Malcolm Wenger say, "The missions we've been doing overseas is coming to us in North America as we reach out to Chinese, Hispanics, East Indians and others. I think there's a new day coming. If we take missions seriously, it will bring major changes as we relate to our new brothers and sisters in Christ. I don't think the conference will ever be the same again."

Wenger, former missionary to the Cheyenne in Montana and with Native Ministries in Manitoba, spoke to CHM's plan to make North American ethnics more a part of the conference family.

The idea threaded its way throughout the meetings, as in missionary Robert Ramseyer's talk on cross-cultural work. He said, "We will be trading our relative comfort now enjoyed in congregations for options of growth and inclusion of traditions and ideals that are different from our own. Those who have felt most at home in the conference will be the ones who are most uncomfortable.

"The conference will need to adapt to other-cultural people, become bicultural or tricultural, rather than expect other-cultural people to adapt to us. Why become a multiethnic church? That's what the gospel is all about—reconciliation, the breaking down of dividing walls, bringing people together who wouldn't normally come together. It's more than toleration; it's becoming one people in Christ."

Staff members also spoke about it in their presentations. Peter Ediger, Mennonite Voluntary Service director, used the slogan-like phrase "many people becoming God's people" during MVS reports.

Multiethnicity also came easily into the report by Alberto Quintela of Minneapolis. "We're planting Hispanic, Anabaptist churches," he said and then outlined how Hispanics could be more a part of the conference: through leadership training, literature development, church planting and congregational resources. Quintela highlighted Marco Guete's taking over some of his functions. Both will be working on a part-time basis.

At one point CHM member Claude Boyer, pastor from Reedley, Calif., said, "Is this vision (for a multiethnic conference) out there in the church? I don't think so. I haven't found this new version on a larger level." Don Steelberg, CHM chairman, replied, "What are the next steps for this approach?" The board asked staff to further develop the proposal for Saskatoon's triennial sessions.

The group also dealt with relations between the United States and Canada. "It's very, very hard to maintain a binational conference," said Larry Kehler, Conference of Mennonites in

continued on next page

Asha Handcrafts, housed in a former missionary bungalow in Jagdeeshpur, India, meets the needs of employment for local young women prior to marriage. From 20 to 27 are employed at any given time in an area where no other work is available. "Asha also teaches homemaking skills," says Mary G. Bauman, Berne, Ind., who spent five months in India in 1985 and is a former General Conference missionary to India.

"As Mennonites, you have a unique opportunity in the media to communicate your faith and positive values based on your heritage," commented Deanna Waters at the first annual meeting of the Mennonite Media Society Inc. The purpose of the newly founded MMS is to create productions with solid values and Christian content from an Anabaptist perspective. MMS agreed to develop a sequel to the docudrama *And When They Shall Ask* that will follow the Mennonites in Canada from 1920-1945. The working title is *The Settlers.*

Mennonite Central Committee Canada has long urged the Canadian government to resume its Vietnam aid program. It was cut off in 1980 after Vietnam invaded Cambodia, and Canada has held that Vietnam should first indicate on intention to withdraw. Canadian Embassy staff recently visited Vietnam and saw areas where recent typhoons, the worst since 1904, had done severe damage. Soon thereafter it was announced that Canada would give $50,000 to the Red Cross for aid to typhoon victims in Vietnam. It is a small amount, but it is better than nothing and may signify a slight measure of openness.

GB *continued*

Canada's general secretary. He said there will be a Canadian CHM by 1989.

Staff member Robert Hull reported that the U.S. military will run the draft from beginning to end, as for example in the induction process. He also disagreed with MCC's decision not to stop withholding taxes of employees. He said the General Board is partly responsible because it was contacted, along with seven other denominations when the decision was being made.

The CHM budget was set at $883,343. It allows for a 2 percent expansion of programs, but does not keep up with inflation.

Mennonite Indian leaders gave gifts to Esther Rinner, who retired March 14 after 15½ years of service.

Commission on Overseas Mission

"Partnering" and "interdependence" are now the hallmarks of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. "We missionaries," said Gerald Stucky, addressing the commission to which he is responsible, "are servants." Job descriptions are characterized by diversification. "Sometimes," smiled Vernelle Yoder, "I introduce myself as "Mis Cellaneous." (Stucky and Yoder are veteran missionaries in Colombia.)

With Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church (BGCMC) in India, COM will begin to move from a ratio of 72/1 dollars sent to 10/1, encouraging the independence of that 86-year-old adult church. Reporting on India was fresh; staff Erwin Rempel and John Sommer returned just days before from a three-week visit. Indian congregations are experiencing new unity. "We are celebrating peace year," writes R. P. Sona, director of Christian Nurture and New Thrust for BGCMC. Exhibiting some North American unity, COM is pursuing joint sponsorship with Mennonite Board of Missions (MC) of faculty at Union Biblical Seminary in Pune, India.

At CHM sessions (from left): Willis Busenitz, Ivorie Lowe

The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan has set a goal of doubling its membership (to 2,500) by the year 2000. FOMCIT is asking COM to "stand with them."

Africa mission reporting came from James Bertsche, retiring executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, under whose auspices COM works on that continent. Work with African Independent Churches continues, as recommended by missionaries in Botswana. "They and we together come as learners to God's word," missionary Jonathan Larson had told Bertsche.

In Zaire, Bertsche said, there is a historic juncture with movement away from centralized leadership. "Sprawling" organizations steer congregations in 33 districts, in five urban centers, among five tribal groups and five more (smaller) ethnic groups. In mission-related primary schools are 50,000 students.

"Presence evangelism" was documented by Doug and Raylene Penner, former COM employees under China Educational Exchange. "Our best contribution," they said, "is to be competent, prepared teachers whom students know to be Christians."

COM approved four missionary couples for service. Average age of the appointees is 36.25. The search is on for evangelists and church planters, reflecting the well-thought-through and stated goals of the commission (as well as of the General Conference). "Evangelism," says missiologist David Barrett, "is the most dangerous business," and he cites the thousands of Christian martyrs already in 1986.

Robert "Jack" Suderman called on COM (with a six-point rationale) to increase an Anabaptist presence in Latin America. "Both Roman Catholics and evangelicals are taking fresh looks at their theology," said Suderman, "and both are discovering Anabaptism. They, who are just now having the reformation that we had 450 years ago, are inviting us."

An invitation that COM has accepted is to participate in the Center for New Religious Movements, Selly Oaks, England.

Division of Administration

Division of Administration members spent much of their meeting time discussing the implementation of the proposed Development Plan, subject to approval by delegates at the triennial sessions in Saskatoon in July. Carol Suter, development director, shared her concern of how to draw together the goals and plans in concrete ways. Many hours have been spent on details that will help make this kind of a fund/commitment drive successful. Many volunteers will need to become involved.

Another priority item on the agenda was the future of data processing for

Drawing on the community of the church is one way to help families facing medical decisions, suggests Evelyn Rouner, a retired college professor from Colwich, Kan. The Health Ethics Review Committee, sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid, met again in Fort Wayne, Ind., in February. During the sharing, two facts surfaced: the high frequency of difficult medical situations and the need for information to aid decision-making. "We need to think about what quality of life is to our Anabaptist theology," Rouner says. "Then we need to build bridges between our theology and current medical practice."

The Agriculture Department intentionally downplayed a report proving the success of a federal health and nutrition program for low-income pregnant mothers and children, congressional critics charged recently. The five-year study of Agriculture's $1.56 billion Women, Infants and Children program showed that the government's investment in prenatal and postnatal care produced "significant health benefits" for participants, including substantial reductions in premature births and fetal and early infancy deaths.

"Theology After Hiroshima," a discussion of the implications for religion in the nuclear age, was the forum topic of James Garrison at Bluffton (Ohio) College Feb. 25. He is the director of the Soviet-American Exchange Program in San Francisco. According to Garrison, there are interesting parallels between response to nuclear weapons and the historic responses in our religious traditions to other great crises.

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the General Conference. Faith and Life Press and the Commission on Education had requested a review prior to new software development for Faith and Life Press. After much discussion of two options, it was decided to go with the new hardware from Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) and to purchase new software that the Conference of Mennonites in Canada is developing. One of the advantages of its system is a centralized name and address file. At a maximum cost of $145,000, it will be financed internally over a period of five years. Thus the cost will fit within the regular DA budget. This computer decision provided direction to satisfy General Conference and Faith and Life Press future needs.

Ray Frey, stewardship director, reported that the Stewards in Mission seminars have been well-attended. Frey said one of the plans of the new year is "to help congregations develop stewardship programs which follow the biblical base of creation, redemption and empowerment."

In other business, Church Extension Services granted Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., a $50,000 loan, and conference controller Duane Earley's term was renewed for three years.

The approved total income budget of the conference is $5,624,320. Of this, $455,570 is for Commission on Education; $1,029,250 is for Commission on Home Ministries; $3,655,808 is for Commission on Overseas Mission, and $483,692 is for Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Women in Mission

Women in Mission executive, staff and council met Feb. 26-March 3. Lela Mae Sawatzky, new office secretary replacing Jeannette Schmidt, was introduced and welcomed. Following the resignation of Joan Wiebe, the executive committee appointed Sara Regier as the new coordinator of WM, effective Aug. 1.

Seventeen representatives of the districts and provinces attended the council sessions. One challenge facing WM groups is declining membership. As women's roles continue to change, WM needs added flexibility in speaking to the concerns of all women. Perhaps service opportunities should expand beyond the traditional. For example, a WM work camp abroad or in North America might be a possibility. How can WM speak to the concerns of younger, professional women? Elsie Flaming, WM president, asked, "Are we in Women in Mission ready to take up the challenge in new and different ways?"

At COM sessions (from left): Wanda Bergen, LaVonda Claassen, Harumi Nomura

WM met only 91.9 percent of their budget. However, cash and material aid given by women for General Conference and non-conference causes amounted to $1,432,445. This amount includes giving to MCC, district projects, local expenses and other non-conference causes.

WM along with CHM and COE sponsored a Parenting for Peace and Justice seminar in January. Local WM groups are encouraged to work with their congregations in sponsoring workshops in their area.

Mission education materials provide another joint WM, COE, CHM, COM project. The first set of materials featuring Latin America and North American Hispanic work will be available at the triennial conference.

A WM council member attends meetings of the Committee on Women's Concerns (CWC), an MCC-sponsored group. WM would like to keep exploring ways of relating to and working with the women of CWC.

Window to Mission, edited by Lois Deckert, continues to be a program and educational resource for WM. Another publication, *Bright Ideas for Program Planning*, edited by Donna Lehman, Fort Wayne, Ind., will be available at the triennial conference.

continued on next page

Job opening

Lakewood Retreat Center has a full-time head cook/food service position open. Lakewood is a Christian retreat and camp conference center owned and operated as an arm of the Mennonite Church. Lakewood is located half way between Brooksville and Dade City, Fla.

For more information, call or write:
Lakewood Retreat Center
c/o Terry Burkhalter
25458 Dan Brown Hill Road
Brooksville, FL 33512
(904) 796-4097

Help needed

Swift Current Bible Institute is now receiving applications for the following positions:
principal, beginning in June,
administrative assistant, beginning in May,
teachers, beginning in September.

Please send all applications and inquiries to:
SCBI
Attention: Personnel Committee
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

"Let's Plant a Church" is the name of a video presentation created by Manuel Baez, Goshen (Ind.) College student sponsored by Hispanic Ministries of the General Conference. Using Comunidad de Fe, Chicago, as a model, the video presents a method of church planting and trains leaders who are in the process of church planting. The Commission on Home Ministries is financing the project together with contributed time from AV-Production, which will have joint ownership.

Over 100 people, tied in some way to home building, attended the first Home Builders Conference sponsored by the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center and a local planning committee Jan. 22-24 at Sarasota, Fla. Home builders came to Florida from as far west as Arizona and as far north as Ontario, and all parts of the Mennonite family, from Beachy Amish to Brethren in Christ, were represented. It is believed that 80 percent of Sarasota's Mennonite permanent resident households are involved in building-related vocations.

Children in Laos are the proud possessors of school kits, assembled and sent to them with love from school children in North America, report MCC workers Titus Peachey and David Merchant. During each school visit, Oun Change, chairman of the Phong Saly education committee, explained that "these school supplies were given to you in the spirit of friendship and peace, because Mennonites are people who love peace and want to build peace in the world. Now that you have received your notebooks and pencils you must be sure to study very hard."

GB *continued*

The devotional packet that compliments the program lessons in *Window to Mission* will be edited by Amy Rinner Dueckman from Clearbrook, B.C.

Mennonite Biblical Seminary

The Mennonite Biblical Seminary did not convene during Council of Commissions this year, but president Henry Poettcker reported to plenary sessions. Harold Thieszen, Buhler, Kan., has been appointed to the staff in church and seminary relations, replacing J. Herbert Fretz, who is retiring.

Two (of a projected four) housing complexes for students have been completed and paid for.

Ruth Ann Gardner will replace Weyburn W. Groff as registrar; Groff is retiring.

Admissions counselor James Metzler reports high interest in seminary training as he visits congregations. Mennonite Biblical Seminary is expecting a turnaround in the slightly lower enrollment of the last year, affirming that congregations call people to the pastoral ministry. *Lois D. Deckert, Gordon Houser, Marion Keeney Preheim, Sharon Wiebe Sommer, Muriel T. Stackley, Bernie Wiebe*

Assistant pastor needed

First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a full-time assistant pastor, commencing Sept. 1. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry and assisting with pulpit duties. Ability to give leadership in church music would be an asset.

For information or application contact:
Archie Epp, congregational chairman
1513 Argyle Ave.
Saskatoon, SK S7H 2W3
(306) 374-1516.

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Clip and send to Mennonite Economic Development Associates,
400 280 Smith St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K2

An American Friends Service Committee report issued recently caused the Navy to respond with assurances that the occurrence of 630 nuclear weapon accidents and incidents over the past 20 years should not occasion any public concern. In a series of private briefings, anonymous Navy officials told representatives of the news media that the high numbers of reported incidents is "misleading" and cautioned that the public should examine the details before drawing any conclusions. That is good, but the Navy has consistently taken strong and determined actions to withhold those very details from public view.

Bread for the World is urging U.S. Christians to spend $.66 for postage and the time to write three letters to Congress that could help save the lives of millions of children who otherwise will die each year from six preventable diseases. This "Offering of Letters" campaign will help members of U.S. churches and community groups write letters to their U.S. congresspeople in support of "The Child Immunization Act of 1986." This legislation, introduced in Congress late last year, would provide $50 million in U.S. funds for worldwide child immunization programs.

President Raul Alfonsin has submitted to Argentina's Congress a proposal that would for the first time create an alternative service program for that nation's conscientious objectors. The legislation would provide for work in social institutions in place of the obligatory military service. The major newspaper *La Razon* identified the Mennonites as the oldest peace church in the nation. The Argentine Mennonite Church, organized in 1923, has a current membership of 1,516, with 28 regular places of worship.

CMM focuses on future of Bible school education

Carman, Man. (GCMC)—1985 was a year of contrasts and changes for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba (CMM). Delegates at the 39th annual sessions held Feb. 21-22 at the Carman Community Hall heard about a sharp decrease in enrollment at Elim Bible Institute, 20 new pastors who were installed or ordained in CMM churches, a budget not quite met and a proposal for a director of evangelism and church growth. In addition to making critical decisions about the future of Elim, delegates accepted the Thompson United Mennonite Church into the CMM membership.

The weekend theme, "That they may all be one," did not deter delegates from expressing varied opinions regarding the current crisis at Elim Bible Institute, which saw a sharp drop in enrollment in 1985 (from 40 to 15 students). Discussion centered on the proposals by the Elim board to cut back staff and implement a modified two-year program cycle, as well as asking the delegate body to keep the school open for three more years to implement these changes and build constituency confidence. Floor discussion represented various opinions, including several eloquent appeals for developing Elim in creative ways through cooperation with other schools, a retreat/resource center or a Christian trade school. Midway through the discussion, Walter Franz, Altona, suggested an alternative resolution that called for greater flexibility and freedom in pursuing new options within a three-year mandate. After more discussion and informal affirmation by the Elim board, the new resolution was approved by 88 percent of the delegates.

Delegates accepted program expansion for the missions and evangelism committee, which proposed that CMM create a new position of director of evangelism and church growth in response to needs identified by a recent study. Affirmation was given to the work of the educational resources committee, which includes youth and young adult ministries, and to that of Faith and Life Communications, which produces English and German devotional radio programs. The committee on camping ministries introduced its new executive director, Monica Wiebe, who described herself as a "product of Manitoba camps," having been involved as a camper and a staff person for 20 years. Wiebe raised the problem of payment for summer camp staff, citing inequities between staff who do the same work but get paid at various rates by their respective churches. A resolution dealing with possible solutions was defeated.

Bernie Wiebe, Ken Heppnes and Frank J. Neufeld were re-elected moderator, secretary, and personnel chairperson, respectively, and J. K. Klassen was elected vice moderator.

A budget of $601,500 in congregational receipts was accepted for 1986, a significant increase over 1985, which saw only 93 percent of congregational donations received. The total budget for 1986, including self-generating funds, was set at $1,234,600, an increase of 4.8 percent over 1985.

In addition to reports, meditations and kingdom reports on various aspects of conference and congregational life, delegates and guests also heard from Carol Suter, director of development for the General Conference. She reported on her 1985 listening tour that took her across the General Conference, and raised several key issues that resulted. Most delegates and guests agreed with her evaluation that conferences and church agencies need to improve communications, and they encouraged the General Conference to do more high profile communication. However, it seemed that the attempt of the General Conference to do so with its new quarterly information publication, *In Touch*, to be sent to every General Conference home, was not reaching Manitobans. A quick survey of those present revealed that over half had not received the fall issue. *Brenda Suderman*

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Cassopolis, MI 49031
(616) 476-2426.

Illinois Mennonite farmers (GC and MC), their families, pastors and interested people gathered at Roanoke (Ill.) Mennonite Church Jan. 18. Resource person Robert Hartzler spoke on the theme "How Should a Congregation Be Involved in the Farm Issues?" One participant summed up the way some churches respond to the farmer: "The only time the church listens to the farmer is when the budget is hurting."

Sisters & Brothers took over operation of the Mennonite Church's media library Jan. 1, moving the film and video resources to their new Goshen, Ind., location. The library includes more than 500 visual productions for use in churches, homes and other educational and fellowship settings. Sisters & Brothers is an independent Mennonite filmmaking group which seeks to produce films and videos which examine the human condition through the eyes of Christian faith. To order resources contact Sisters & Brothers Film and Video, 125 E. Lincoln, Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 533-4167.

Congress '88 . . . A National Festival of Evangelism, will take place in the summer of 1988 with the theme "That the World May Believe," it was announced in Washington by a spokesperson from the washington Roundtable on Evangelism. Projected goals for the congress were presented for discussion by David Shenk of the Mennonite Church and three others. These include celebrating Jesus Christ as Savior and Sovereign, challenging churches to respond to society's needs, uniting in reaching 100 million unchurched people in the nation and providing motivation and instruction for churches to evangelize.

Alberta delegates debate future of SCBI, Camp Valaqua

Taber, Alta.—Delegates wrestled with the fate of Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute at the annual Conference of Mennonites in Alberta (CMA) sessions here March 7-8. More than 130 people registered.

SCBI, owned jointly by the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan (CMS) and by CMA, has a recently built facility that can handle more than 80 students, but the current enrollment is only 42. With a 1985 deficit of $24,878, the school's financial viability requires greatly increased enrollment or moving to a smaller facility. SCBI business manager Rick Janzen said that the school needs 65 students in order to break even. CMA is responsible for 30 percent of the financial support, CMS 70 percent.

But finances were not the only issue. Outgoing principal David Ortis called SCBI "a patient in need of a diagnosis and a cure." And, he admitted, the cure may be its death. "Mennonite institutions have been too unwilling to die when they need to," he said. He called upon the churches to take leadership in providing that diagnosis and cure. But he hasn't been too encouraged. Last fall, Ortis said, he sent a letter to 60 congregations asking for prospective students. Only two responded.

The delegates made a variety of responses. Kathy Peters, Didsbury, said, "The problems at SCBI are the same as the ones in our homes and churches." She then called for fasting and prayer.

One of the problems several referred to was the lack of discipline at the school. One man who spoke emotionally for greater discipline was followed by a man who spoke emotionally for greater patience.

Toward the end of the discussion a man said that the main issue is that the "spiritual" conservatives are withdrawing their support while the "stagnant . . . status quo" liberals are holding onto the school. Chairman Henry Goerzen, Carstairs, and host pastor Elwin Epp differed strongly, saying they were not liberals, and they supported the school.

Discussion held during a break

In the end, delegates voted to allow the executives of the two conferences plus the study committee that had conducted an evaluation of SCBI to meet and decide how best to proceed.

A similar discussion was held about Camp Valaqua. Although the camp did not meet its 1985 budget, a 3 percent increase was passed.

Camp director Eric Froese reported that children seem increasingly insecure, that many are afraid their parent(s) will leave them or will die.

Rudy Janzen asked why more campers are not returning to camp. Bill Wiebe called upon churches to take more initiative in getting their children to camp. One father objected to the lack of supervision at camp, and another said more spiritual input was needed.

In a related action, delegates voted to place youth work among the duties of the camp director. David Braun's position of conference pastor will then become full time. He has handled youth work part time.

The conference theme, "Called to Faithful Living," was addressed in three talks. David Braun presented a "Challenge to the Conference." Jacob Wiebe, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Calgary, spoke on the calls of the family and the fellowship to faithful living.

In other business:

- a proposal by the education committee "that for 1987 the subsidy for the conference papers become a direct responsibility of the local congregation" was defeated;
- a motion that the conference proceed with a building plan in 1988 for the camp director's residence was amended to require 80 percent of the votes but only received 74 percent;
- delegates agreed to accept David Braun's "Guidelines for the Calling and Ordination of Ministers" and to pay the mileage for pulpit exchange;
- a budget of $284,803 was accepted;
- a proposed 5 percent salary increase for David Braun was turned down; and
- delegates voted to seek more inter-Mennonite cooperation. *Gordon Houser*

Service coordinator needed

Service coordinator needed for **Mennonite Community Closet Outreach Program** at North Battleford, Sask. Position opens July 1 and is for a 2- to 3-year term. The major objective of the outreach program is to provide Christian counsel and support to needy people who come in contact with the Closet. Training in social work and experience working with people of Native ancestry an asset. Position ideal for a married couple, as one partner could work part time in the Closet Store. Honorarium D.O.E. and financial requirements.

Send resume to:
Mennonite Community Closet
1022 101st St.
North Battleford, SK S9A 0Z3.

Editor position open

General Conference Mennonite Church is accepting applications for the position of editor of *The Mennonite*, open Sept. 1 in Newton, Kan.

Applicants with writing and editing skills, some theological training and familiarity with the General Conference should submit a resume by May 1 to:

General Secretary
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114.

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One-bedroom apartment, utilities, phone and part-time salary of $400-$500 per month for a live-in custodian to take care of church building and grounds and the community center at **First Mennonite Church**, 430 W. Ninth Ave., Denver, CO 80204.

Contact pastor Walter Friesen, (303) 892-1038.

Position open **April 1**.

Position in music

Canadian Mennonite Bible College invites applications for a junior position in music. The major focus of this position will be in children's music (possibly forming a model children's choir), youth music and directing the CMBC Ensemble (a choral group which does considerable congregational visitation). Auxiliary areas could be accompanying, music theory, music therapy, private instruction, basic conducting or drama and fine arts. A master's degree is preferred, but not essential. A less than full-time appointment might be possible. Applicants should be committed to the Christian faith and in sympathy with the goals of the college.

Send applications and resumes by March 31 to:
Academic Dean
Canadian Mennonite Bible College
600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

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Position in business

Ph.D. and experience in business. Teaching in Computer Information Systems, Finance, Beginning Accounting and Quantitative Methods. Begin fall 1986 or fall 1987. Minorities are encouraged to apply.

Send resume to:
Lee F. Snyder, academic dean
Eastern Mennonite College
Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

Job openings

Director, **skill trainer** and **direct-care staff** are needed at **Oregon Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.**, (group homes for developmentally disabled adults).

Send inquiries to:
Jane Toews
Teaching Research
345 Monmouth Ave.
Monmouth, OR 97361
(503) 838-1220, ext. 401.

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For further information contact:
Don Kauffman
Mennonite Disabilities Committee
1712 W. Clinton
Goshen, IN 46526
(219) 533-9720.

Commission On Education

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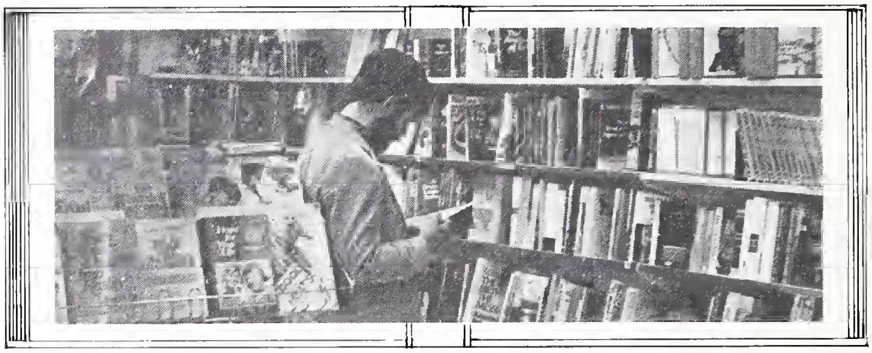

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Commission on Education

LETTERS

Are we hypocrites?

When I was in Denver last April for Alive '85, people talked about how we needed to include peacemaking when spreading the gospel. This meant peacemaking outside of the church. It's good we are moving to non-Mennonite areas, but also frustrating to find out that many members of the Mennonite churches haven't made a commitment to peace.

My family and I attended a Mennonite church recently where this Mennonite doctrine wasn't being taught. Another couple, who wanted to join that church, had to go to the pastor and ask if they could join, even though they didn't believe in pacifism. The pastor's reply was, "Pacifism is a back-burner issue and it doesn't really matter."

If the pastor takes this position, the congregation will also take it. At this same church I had to ask more than 10 people what a pacifist was before I could get a definition. When I asked what MCC stood for, one reply was, "Isn't that a part of the KGB?"

I know the church has material on this subject because I received some from MCC. If we have the material being sent to the conferences and churches, and it's not getting to the people, then we have a communication problem. It appears some pastors want more people in their churches, and they are telling the people what they want to hear, not what we as Mennonites believe in.

Before we can go outside the church we must get the church in order. This must be done with God's love, and it must be done now. The church may even suffer a drop in membership, but whether people stay or go, we'll be better off.

Each person needs to evaluate where he or she stands on this issue and decide if being a Mennonite is what they really want to be. If we have Christians become members of our church who don't hold this belief, we are hypocrites. *Dennis K. Masser, 2 Lexington Court, Easton, PA 18042*

Feb. 11

What do our roots mean?

I like what Dan Zehr had to say in his "We Believe in the Church" (Jan. 14 issue), and I have enjoyed the "Foundations for Our Faith" series. They have caused me to do some thinking and that thinking has now led to a response.

It is commonplace among us Christians to compare the church to the "Old Israel." However, I have some questions about this practice. What does it mean for us that God came to us in Jewish form? What does it mean for us that first-century Jews risked their lives to spread that good news to the gentiles? What does it mean for us to have a Scripture which is full of Jewish praise, worship and insight as well as God's holy commands? I wonder if in our comparisons we sometimes end up casting aspersions on the roots to which we have been grafted and which continue to nourish us. In the light of the ongoing reality of Israel and Jewish experience should we continue to do so? *Bruce Hiebert, #101 Louis Riel House, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6*

Feb. 14

Another childless couple

Bravo to the author of "When the Babies Don't Come" (Jan. 14 issue). It hit so close to home for my husband and me that my own parents wondered if we had written it. Well, we sure could have. I guess what I hope this article can do is make people aware of the kind of comments they make without thinking, those "thoughtless comments on our childlessness." Don't force us to make up some quick comeback. It hurts enough. One consolation is to know that there are many others going through this difficulty and that God is near and working in us all.

Also of great help to us in that issue was the editorial by Gordon Houser entitled "That Lonesome Valley." It helped us put things into perspective and to realize that "it does me no good to compare sufferings." Thanks. *Another childless couple*

Feb. 17

Should be more constructive

The article by Bernie Loeppky, "Mixed Models of Church and Leadership" (Feb. 11 issue), raises the question of whether our current model of pastoral ministry has any place within our understanding of leadership within our congregations.

It is easy to create idealized versions of the past which never existed. In fact, the professional pastoral model can be understood as a response and solution to earlier crises and problems in church leadership when those models ceased to function effectively.

The reasonable conclusion from the article seems to be that we no longer need pastors to lead our congregations. Does the author mean to suggest that all our pastors now resign and that we close our seminary, since it will no longer be needed to train people for professional pastoral ministry?

Rather than undermining the ministry which we have and increasing the negative self-image of pastors, we need to be affirming of the good gifts that by God's grace our pastors continue to bring to our congregations. I am grateful that God is continuing to call women and men to the new challenges and opportunities for ministry within our churches. *John A. Esau, Director, Ministerial Leadership Services, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114*

Feb. 17

The shuttle tragedy

Imprinted on my inner eye—perhaps forever—is that serpentine cloud hanging languidly yet horribly over the ocean on Jan. 28. Silver linings have been hard to come by.

If the catastrophe teaches us anything, though, it may be that the world worships the wrong god when it bows down at the feet of that peculiarly modern idol, scientific technology.

The brave souls who perished, after all, were outward bound to explore the creation of One who is sovereign over all—even fallible, fallen technology. *Daniel W. Shenk, 1721 Washington St., Cedar Falls, IA 50613*

Feb. 18

MCC openings

Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., has immediate employment opportunities for an experienced secretary in MCC Peace Section and for an administrative assistant in Information Services. Also coming up in spring and summer are openings for secretaries, receptionist and administrative assistants.

For more information contact:
MCC Personnel Services
Box M
Akron, PA 17501
(717) 859-1151;
or
MCC Canada
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8
(204) 475-3550.

When MKs become adults

Tobia Vandenberg

Bamboo trees gracefully bow and sweep the sky almost everywhere in Southeast Asia. Resilient and flexible, they withstand even the most fearful tropical storms. Most children of missionaries (MKs) are also resilient, weathering the sometimes stormy adjustments to the United States and Canada.

Bamboo is transformed into many things: split-rail fences, chicken coops, frames, baskets, toothpicks, chopsticks, crafts. Even when exported, these things remain essentially bamboo. MKs as adults choose a variety of careers, and most integrate into North American society, yet they retain some essence of their multicultural background.

As adults, former MKs make decisions common to other adults: career, marriage, family, and faith expressions. That they have grown up between and belonging to two cultures produces a greater variety of factors to consider in making these life decisions.

International perspectives. In browsing through replies to a survey sent out to about 25 former Commission on Overseas Mission MKs of all ages (August 1985), it is interesting to see how individual each one is. Even so, an essence of having a wider international perspective pervades throughout. It is expressed in various ways and attitudes: seeing beyond "the social peer pressures of their present situations," finding it easier "to decide to live overseas in a new culture/environment than to decide to settle down here and buy a house, etc.," warming up quickly to foreigners, seeing international contacts as gifts. Often there is a "higher priority on justice, equality, development, service and other issues related to a world-based perspective."

Such a perspective, however, is not an exclusive domain. Mennonite Central Committee personnel, for example, also gain global insights as a result of their short-term experiences overseas.

Careers. The backgrounds and perspectives of these former MKs directly and indirectly influence their career choices and the people around them. A homemaker and mother of two remarks, "I hope that the children will be developing a wider worldview than the standard shortsighted view of the untraveled." Ruth Keidel, assistant secretary for MCC Personnel Services, enjoys working with people in preparation for overseas assignments. Cindy Sprunger, who works for the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives in the area of Asian and Pacific Affairs, states, "I feel far more sensitive to non-Western cultures than many of my professional colleagues and feel strongly that the United States must share its wealth with the world."

MKs as adults represent many professions and vocations: writers, doctors, homemakers, professors, truck drivers, teachers, psychologists, nurses, musicians, MCC workers and, yes, some missionaries. Do former MKs return to the familiar? Not always. "We have noticed how ethnocentric we are in spite of our overseas experience in the past. As we move into a new (and not very open) culture, we have to deal with putting away some of our cultural ideas and open our minds to new ways of thinking."

Marriage. How does a multicultural background affect marriage? Some choose to marry those who share the same background. "I married a woman with a background similar to my own. We speak in two languages, we share friends from North and South America. We share literature, music and travel to both regions. The potential problem is deciding/agreeing on where to settle. Our allegiances are both many and none."

"I married another former MK. We enjoy sharing experiences and being understood by one another. Having both experienced living in other cultures also was helpful in lessening culture shock when we came overseas again."

Others have married people who, although they do not share the same background, do share the same attitudes and values: a general interest in international people and affairs, adaptability, interest in voluntary service, love of people. Even so, after marriage there is a dynamic two-way growth. One woman whose husband was at first only remotely interested in her "home" country, sees how "the Lord is slowly developing in him an interest in people outside the United States." Another shares, "My husband (deceased) frequently commented that boarding school increased my self-sufficiency and independence. I had to, and have to, work at being open to people close to me."

Some have found a common bond in their Mennonite faith and heritage. In addition to that, one couple speaks of "a mutual desire to be firstly Christian in our expression of faith."

It is clear that the MKs need an interdependent network. And that is what the church is all about—caring one for another.

Families. Family life can be enriching and at times bewildering. A family now living in the United States writes, "Each member of our nuclear family was born in a different country. Husband—United States, wife—India, son—Morocco, daughter—Indonesia. Our menus reflect this. Our friendships are worldwide. Our children are comfortable with internationals and adventuresome with food. It has been great." Another mother says she felt close to her Japanese neighbor: "Our children grew up together." Conservation, frugality and cooking from "scratch" are familiar trademarks of such families (and people). Again though, this is not their exclusive domain. As one woman put it, "I view this attitude (lack of seeking after material possessions) as one to be cultivated by every believer." We in North America have easy access to books such as the *More with Less Cookbook*.

Two women who were MKs themselves, now missionaries, express concern in raising their children. Where's home? "Interestingly, on our furlough now I sensed a homelessness in Canada. . . . The definition of 'home' I've had is not the same as my husband's or peers' in Canada. I am trying to define my role as a 'homemaker' and mother of three children (MKs)."

"One drawback with both of us being MKs is that we feel a kind of homelessness at times because we don't feel close to the hometowns of either of our parents. We've spent so little time there and have moved frequently. I am wondering what my children will experience as second-generation MKs. Where do they belong?"

A former MK, now married, responds, "It can be difficult . . . but if dealt with openly and in the context of love and care, I think it is one of the best ways to educate and develop people. I would not trade the experience. It is important, though, for parents to include children in decision making and work through adjustments with them."

Some missionaries have made it a practice to return to the same town or city each furlough. This tends to develop a warm sense of continuity if the churches and communities support, nurture and embrace these families as "one of us."

"Sometimes I suffer from the pain of many good-byes and so in our transience become impatient to develop close friends," muses one mother, also a former MK.

For some families living in North America it is unique to have grandparents living in Hong Kong, India, Zaire or Colombia. Family reunions become poignant times of memory building "for the next four years."

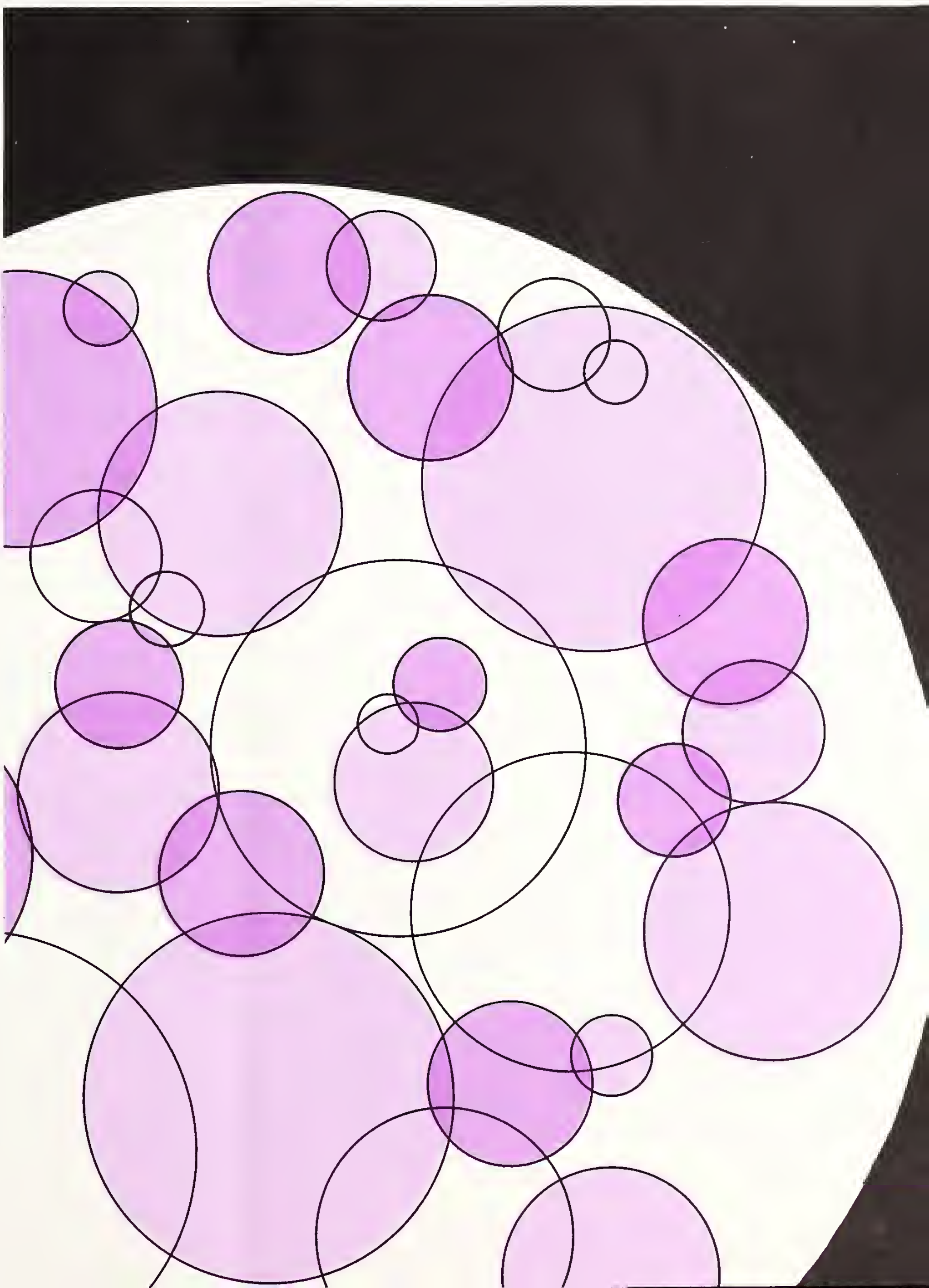
Faith expressions. Adult MKs settle into a variety of faith expressions and church affiliations. Some opt out of church. Others go through a process of sorting through the various options they encounter here in North America (see "MKs Reconcile Two Worlds"—Dec. 24, 1985, issue). This is a highly personal process: for some easy, for others lengthy. Some do break in the storm. A supportive, caring church community in either case is important.

Just one note: It is not uncommon for MKs to have "a feeling of commonality with other denominations." There are two possible reasons for this: interdenominational schools for missionary children where close bonds are formed and the cooperation between denominations in countries where Christians are a small minority. My closest friends in high school were two Lutheran girls from Scandinavia and a Mennonite girl from Canada.

As with anyone else we need to allow these adults to explore and be themselves. There is more to who they are than just being "the son or daughter of the Friesens, missionaries to ________." A woman with the perspective of age shares, "Only in my 30s did I feel I finally had my own identity."

Certainly their experiences and insights are unique, but these are getting less unusual as our world shrinks to a global village.

Tobia Vandenberg, 1514 10th Ave. N., Saskatoon, SK S7K 3A8, grew up in Taiwan. She is studying elementary education, specializing in Indian and Northern education at the University of Saskatchewan.



Canticle on Maundy Thursday

Muriel Thiessen Stackley

I have come to feast, Lord,
on this miniscule bit of bread
and droplet of symbol-juice.

I feast to remember your fast:
no breakfast in Herod's courtyard,
nor in Pilate's halls,
nor at the pillar of beating,
nor on the cobblestones of pain.

No breakfast, I remember,
though the women surely
offered you bread
as you staggered by—
something Jewishly substantial.

You also turned down the breaking-fast,
sour-bitter-potentially-helpful
drink that you were offered on the cross.

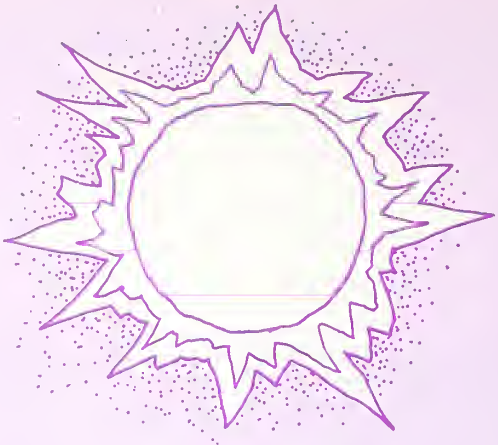
This symbol of droplet-juice
will call to mind
the drawn dryness of your dying mouth.

I eat and drink in remembrance of you.

Good Friday counsel

Ruth Naylor

Life was echoing
like a tomb
And the voice spoke
softly warm:
"If Easter means anything,
my child,
It means leaving that
which feels dead behind
And walking out
into newness of life.
That is the resurrection!"



Christ

Monte J. Zerger

Chosen from the lion's tribe, he came to warm the night
Heal a world afflicted and lead it to the light
Reveal age-old mysteries to those who dare to see
Inside us all there dwells a Christ just waiting to be freed
Servant of the multitudes, he drew them all to him
Teach us, O Lord, to live our lives more like this humble King

Jesus is risen

Tobia Vandenberg

Those strong gentle hands which blessed children
cooled fevers, restored sight, . . . broke the bread,
Now are torn, broken, blood caking around the piercing nails.

That brow, at times wrinkled with concern, raised in
laughter, calm in prayer, . . . sweating in Gethsemane,
Now is bowed in pain, blood dripping from thorns
pushed into his tender skin.

Those eyes which wept for Lazarus, smiled to the children,
spoke to those around him . . . turned to Peter as the cock
crowed,
Now are full of pain, feeling forsaken, yet noting with
clarity and love those surrounding him.

Those feet full of purpose, traveling the dusty roads of
Galilee, stopping under the sycamore tree . . .
plodding the way to Calvary,
Now are fixed together, held to wood, the nail driving pain through.

Those lips which told parables, welcomed the children,
criticized the hypocrites . . . said, "Father, forgive them . . ."
Now utter the curtain-rending cry, "It is finished."

His followers, saddened, without hope, and filled with fear,
laid his body away . . .
"But on the first day of the week, at early dawn,
they came to the tomb . . . two men in dazzling
apparel . . . said to them, 'He has risen!' "

Now, He is alive . . . the living One, blessing the children,
restoring wholeness . . . and through his death for us,
He lives in us!

MEDITATION

Is war a modern Moriah?

"Then God said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about' " (Genesis 22:2).

In 1952 I stood in front of a temple in central India where, I was told, it had been common until just a few years before to perform human sacrifice. It was the duty of a certain man to go to some poor family in the kingdom and buy a child who would be taken away in the middle of the night. I am at a loss to describe the emotion I felt as I stood before that little god sitting on his red velvet throne.

How was it that Abraham was prepared to carry out the command? What parent who today hearing a voice telling you to sacrifice your child, would consider it to be the voice of God? Could it have been that, in the society of that day, if you wanted to show your highest devotion to God, you would be willing to sacrifice your children?

Human sacrifice continued among the Israelites for many centuries. In Leviticus 18 and 20 the command was given to stone the man who passes his children through the fire of Molech. Yet in 1 Kings we read about Solomon, because of his wives, building a high place to Molech. Later Micah challenged the idea of giving the fruit of one's body for the sin of one's soul. Jeremiah condemned it. Not until the Israelites were led captive to Babylon was the practice irradicated.

Today we are not aware of any place where human sacrifice is practiced with the exception of one—the field of battle. The average age of the U.S. soldier in Vietnam was 19.

For most of the people in our society it is considered the highest devotion to God (and country) to be willing to give your life or the life of your child in war.

During World War I Wilfred Owen wrote *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young:*

"So Abram rose, and clave the wood, and went,
And took the fire with him, and a knife.
And as they sojourned both of them together
Isaac the firstborn, spake and said, My Father,
Behold the preparations, fire and iron,
But where the lamb for this burnt offering?
Then Abram bound the youth with belts and straps,
And builded parapets and trenches there,
And stretched for the the knife to slay his son.
When lo! an angel called him out of heaven,
Saying, Lay not thy hand upon the lad,
Neither do anything to him. Behold,
A ram, caught in a thicket by its horns;
Offer the Ram of Pride instead of him.
But the old man would not so, but slew his son,
And half the seed of Europe, one by one."

During World War I, on one particular assault, 60,000 men lost their lives in one day.

Willard Unruh

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Five years ago Oral Roberts, the TV preacher from Tulsa, Okla., reported this vision of Jesus: "When I opened my eyes, there he stood . . . some 900 feet tall, looking at me." That would be over half the height of the Empire State Building.

How high a Jesus did Pilate see standing before him on that first Good Friday? What happened to Pilate?

How big is Jesus in your life?

Our prayer is that this issue may help you look at Jesus, realize his meaning a little more fully in your life and feel the hope that comes through his life, death and resurrection.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Their blood cries out

After Cain unjustly killed his brother Abel, he was unable to escape the consequences. He heard the Lord say, "The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. . ." (Genesis 4:11a).

When Pilate faced the innocent Jesus, he felt that haunting quality when innocent blood is shed. With a ceremonial hand-washing he said, "I am innocent of this man's blood. . ." (Matthew 27:24).

Unfortunately the aroused religious leaders with their rebel crowd were too intoxicated with their personal ego trips to acknowledge what they knew about innocent blood. So they foolishly said to Pilate, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27:25). That innocent blood has cried from the hill of the skull ever since.

Oscar Romero became archbishop of San Salvador on Feb. 22, 1977, because he was considered a "safe" choice. Three years later, on March 24, 1980, he was gunned down while saying Mass in a hospital chapel. The last words he spoke were, "This is my body which will be given up for you. . . . This is the cup of my blood . . . shed for you."

The blood of Archbishop Oscar Romero still reverberates throughout Latin America, and its cry echoes around the world. Educated in Rome and known for loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church when he was appointed, Oscar Romero's homilies (sermons) show a remarkable global spiritual vision.

Oscar Romero demonstrated an unconditional *trust* in Jesus Christ. In the midst of the oppression and corruption in Latin America, he called for *hope*: "The more full of troubles and problems we are, the more bewildering life's ways, the more we must look up to the skies and hear the good news: 'A savior is born to you.' "

To the powerless he spoke of *courage*: "Let us not be disheartened as though human realities made impossible the accomplishment of God's plan."

Amidst profound agony he pointed to *resurrection*: "Those who have disappeared will reappear. . . . Affliction . . . will become Easter joy if we join ourselves to Christ. . . ."

As violence grew, he preached the *Beatitudes*: "There are people who opt for guerrilla war, for revolution. . . . The church's option is for the Beatitudes. . . . Christ was sowing a moral revolution in which we human beings come to change ourselves from worldly thinking."

When hatred was rampant, Romero proclaimed *love*: "I wish to show that the nucleus of my life is to witness the love of God to humans and of humans among themselves. . . . I have tried to follow the supreme shepherd, Jesus Christ, who directed his love to all." In all he claimed: "I simply want to be the builder of a great affirmation, the affirmation of God, who loves us and who wants to save us" (Brockman, *The Church Is All of You*, foreword).

The blood of Abel, of Jesus, of all the martyred saints, cries with Romero, "Some want to keep a gospel so disembodied that it doesn't get involved at all in the world it must save. Christ is now in history. Christ is in the womb of the people. Christ is now bringing about the new heavens and the new earth" (*Ibid*).

After a particularly violent week in San Salvador in March 1980, Romero said, "The church . . . cannot keep quiet before such abhorrent action." He spoke to government leaders: "In the name of God, and in the name of this suffering people whose cries rise up to the heavens every day in greater tumult, I implore you, I beg you, I order you, in the name of God: Cease the repression!"

To the soldiers he said, "Brothers and sisters, you are our own people; you kill your fellow peasants. Someone's order to kill should not prevail; rather, what ought to prevail is the law of God that says, 'Do not kill.' No soldier is obliged to obey an order against the law of God; no one has to fulfill an immoral law."

He ended with these words to the people: "The church preaches your liberation just as we have studied it in the holy Bible today. It is a liberation that has, above all else, respect for the dignity of the person, hope for humanity's common good and the transcendency that looks before all to God and only from God derives its hope and its strength."

The next evening he was murdered.

This Easter season let us listen as their blood cries out to us. We are a people of resurrection—hope and new life—for all the world. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:07 APRIL 8, 1986

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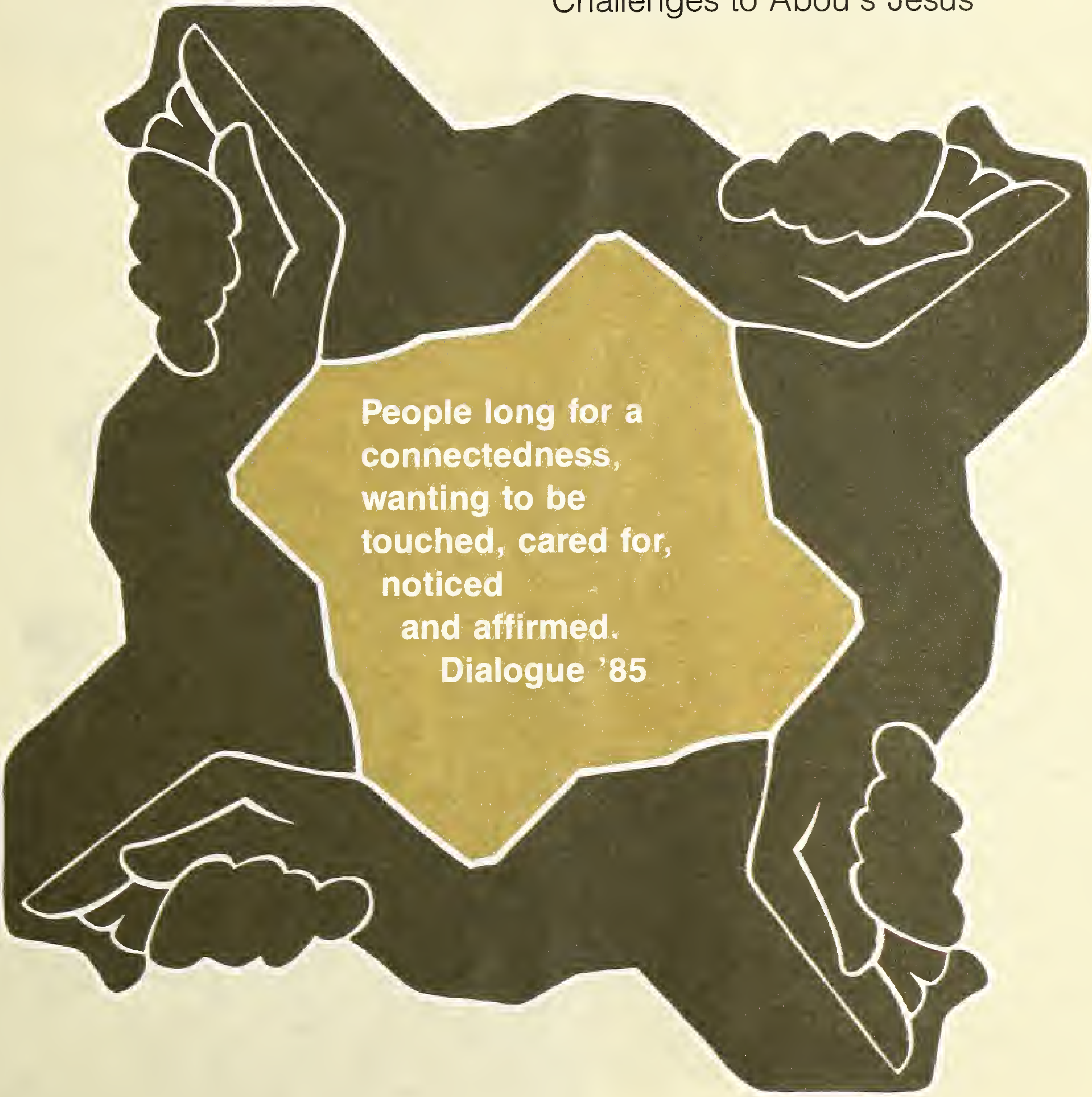
Inside this COE issue:

Parenting in the faith family

Love and discipline your children

Challenges to Abou's Jesus



People long for a connectedness, wanting to be touched, cared for, noticed and affirmed.

Dialogue '85

Parenting in the faith fam

Myrna and *Randy Krehbiel*

Some months ago a friend gave us a special gift. She stayed with our sons (then ages 8 and 10) on late notice when we both needed to attend an unexpected meeting.

As a museum employee, she planned a work project for our boys—moving a loom. She gave them a tour, explained expansion plans and showed exhibits to them. When we left, our sons were already enthusiastically moving the loom. When we returned, they were asking her questions about the museum exhibits and excitedly urging us to stay awhile to see what they had seen.

Simple enough, eh? Not really. Our friend showed our sons that someone from their faith family (congregation) cared. They had been given meaningful work. Someone listened to them and taught them.

This friend and her husband have invited our sons to go to ball games with them. On Sunday mornings after church this couple frequently spends time talking to our children and the many children of the church. Rather than simply passing interest, they choose to make time to parent the church's children.

Looking for a quick fix. In exploring trends in General Conference Mennonite churches, Carol Suter found general concern about what is happening to our home families and faith families. In addition to financial concerns, "people seemed to predict increased family disintegration and tension . . . divorce (including church leaders), more single-parent families, . . . parent/child tension . . . drug and alcohol (abuse)." Do these concerns have a factual base? Who should be addressing these needs of congregations and families?

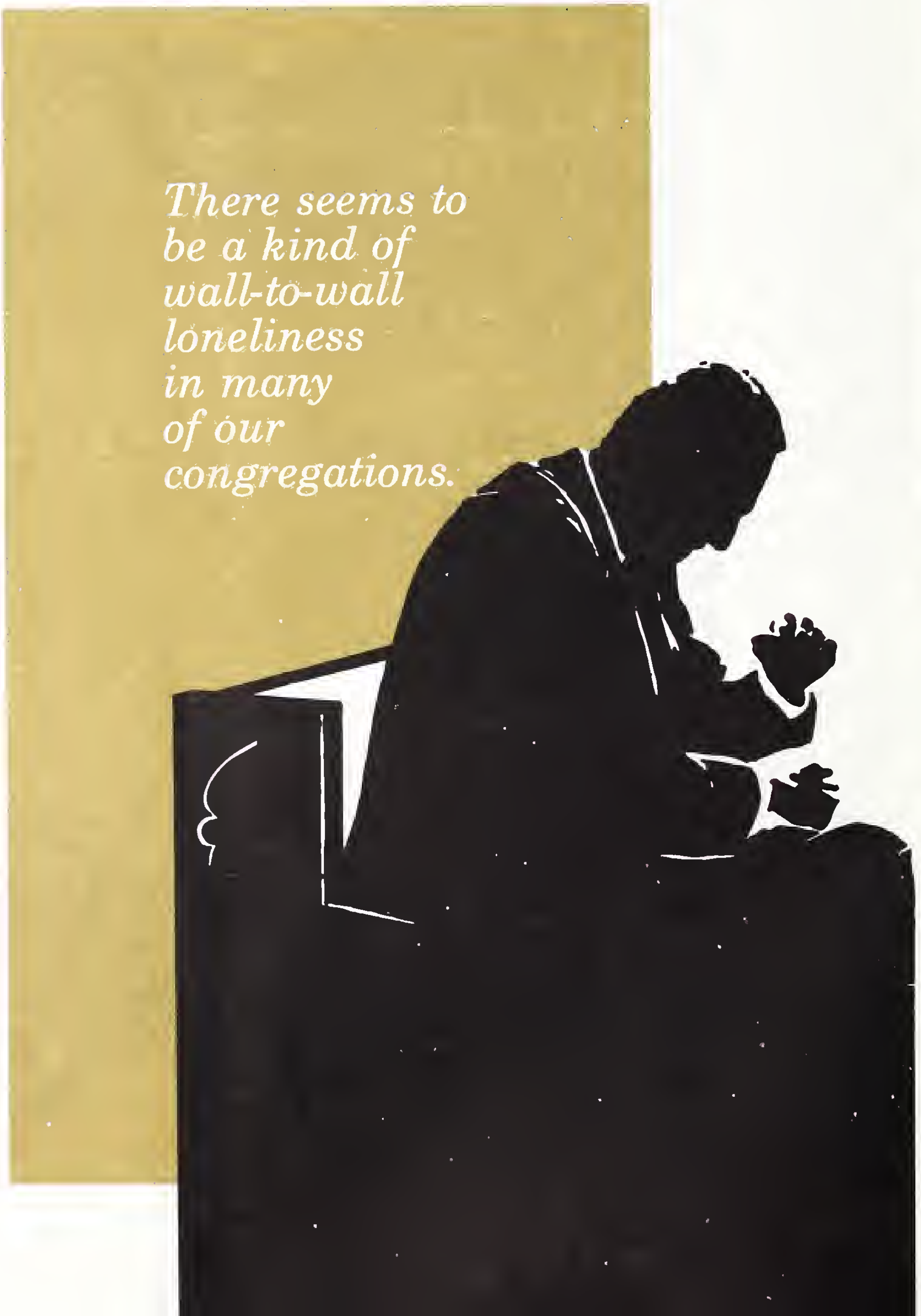
Can we celebrate the strengths in our home families and faith families? Is the story of our caring friend an isolated one?

In a society sometimes obsessed with individual happiness, we have often ignored difficult situations and sold out to an "expert" model to address human needs and suffering, even of close neighbors. Leaving it to experts allows us to be aloof and free of heavy demands on our time. Suter's responses show that we are victims of the "expert" myth. Requests for fix-it and prevention programs for families abound: "programs for parenting, marriage enrichment, premarriage, family conflict, aging family members, alcoholism and family violence."

Faith family. These responses also show we haven't forgotten the teaching and healing power of our faith communities. "Our members look to the church to provide the sense of community, humanity and compassion that will be needed even more in the future." Suter and Vern Preheim, in their meetings with congregations across the General Conference, describe a kind of wall-to-wall loneliness in many of our congregations. They heard a longing for connectedness among our people, wanting to be touched, cared for, noticed and affirmed.

If our people are lonely and separated, too busy and overcommitted, and worried about the family ills of society creeping into their own families and faith families, will it be enough to find some expert or some program to fix it or prevent it?

John Westerhoff III, a Christian educator, says that even though the members of our families may all be Chris-



There seems to be a kind of wall-to-wall loneliness in many of our congregations.

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During 1985 a project, Dialogue '85, was carried out in the General Conference Mennonite Church. Under the direction of Vern Preheim, general secretary, and Carol Suter, director of development, "listening" meetings were held with representatives from all areas of the conference. At the end of each session, participants were given a chance to fill out a questionnaire. These were tabulated and analyzed.

Those who filled out these forms gave high priority to more help in local family life ministries. They suggested that General Conference staff should focus more on such needs (second only to affirmation for overseas mission leadership). These results are referred to in the Krehbiel article.

tians, that isn't good enough. "For any family to be Christian it must share its life together in a community of Christian faith. . . . The key to Christian life is life in the church understood as *faith family*."

Great Commission. Rather than mourning the ills of families or talking over what the family used to do, Dennis Guernsey, professor of marriage and family at Fuller Theological Seminary, says, "Congregations must view building family strengths as fundamental to the Great Commission (Matthew 28). Families make or break disciples. They are the baptizers who bring people to faith and help these new believers feel at home in the faith community. Such families build in the values that Christ charges us to teach into their daily living. He suggests a link between the home family and its faith family "in such a way as to effectively fulfill its own [the church's] purpose for being, the fulfillment of the Great Commission."

Responses to Carol Suter's survey show that people want more family programming that goes along with evangelism and church planting and equips our congregations to do outreach. So it seems we already understand that the call to nurture each other in the church is also the way we witness to and serve others. But our concerns show that we think we should be doing more witnessing and nurturing or doing it better. What are the implications for our churches? For your church?

Church families. Jesus, in Mark 3:7-35, says his brothers and sisters are those who do the will of God. Kenneth L. Gibble, a Church of the Brethren pastor, says, "Christians need to bring family life down from the pedestal. They need to bring it down to where God intended it to be." Gibble boils down family life to commitment, full and honest relationships, admitting our failures and asking God to help us keep our promises to each other.

That tall order will likely not be filled if we continue to read only from a menu of busy separateness, striving for the freedom of an *a la carte* choice. It is likely not attainable if we separate our faith families along bloodlines—dividing into new Mennonites and those with centuries of Mennonite forebears.

Hope for the future. Can we be a faith family? Can we "look not only to our own interests but also to the interests of others . . . having the mind of Jesus" (Philippians 2:4, 5)? There is hope. There are simple, practical ways to begin.

1. *Make time for each other.* Evaluate your schedule. Plan time to be together in your families and faith families to listen, have fun, worship, pray and study.

2. *Pray together and in solitude.* Prayer is the language of the Christian community, its very being (Nouwen, *Reaching Out*). Try more inclusive forms of prayer, not only in language but in practice. Encourage and listen to the prayers of children, youth, older people and women.

3. *Reach out.* Remember, telephones aren't as close as we can get. Find ways to regularly serve and minister directly to those in need. Take your Sunday school classes (of all ages) regularly to homes for the aged, mentally ill and developmentally delayed.

4. *Reach out again.* Don't forget those who hurt and need in your own faith families. Listen, help, confront, pray. Set up a special ongoing task force that attends to the healing needs in your congregations. We are all healers who are also in need of healing. Also, teach and model regular conflict management.

5. *Teach and study together.* Appoint a family life education committee for your congregation to coordinate study and discussion together. Don't look for simplistic answers based on returning to old formulas of power, control and discipline. Find scriptural foundation for the hand-in-hand work of kingdom building and family building.

6. *Transform your organization.* When the larger business world increasingly recognizes the need of its employees to care and be cared for, to touch and be touched, can we do less in our church organizations? Don't just borrow the sterile, now antiquated business model that coldly and arbitrarily uses democratic procedures and promotes unnecessary hierarchical separation. Bring together what you value in being a person and a Christian with what you value in being a worker or an administrator in your church. Make sure the jobs in your congregation are rotated frequently. Don't let the stereotypes of too young, too old, sexism and ethnic heritage prevent your faith family from enjoying the skills and talents of every person in your congregation.

Carry the cross together. Concerned about your congregation, your families? With God's help, there's much you can do.

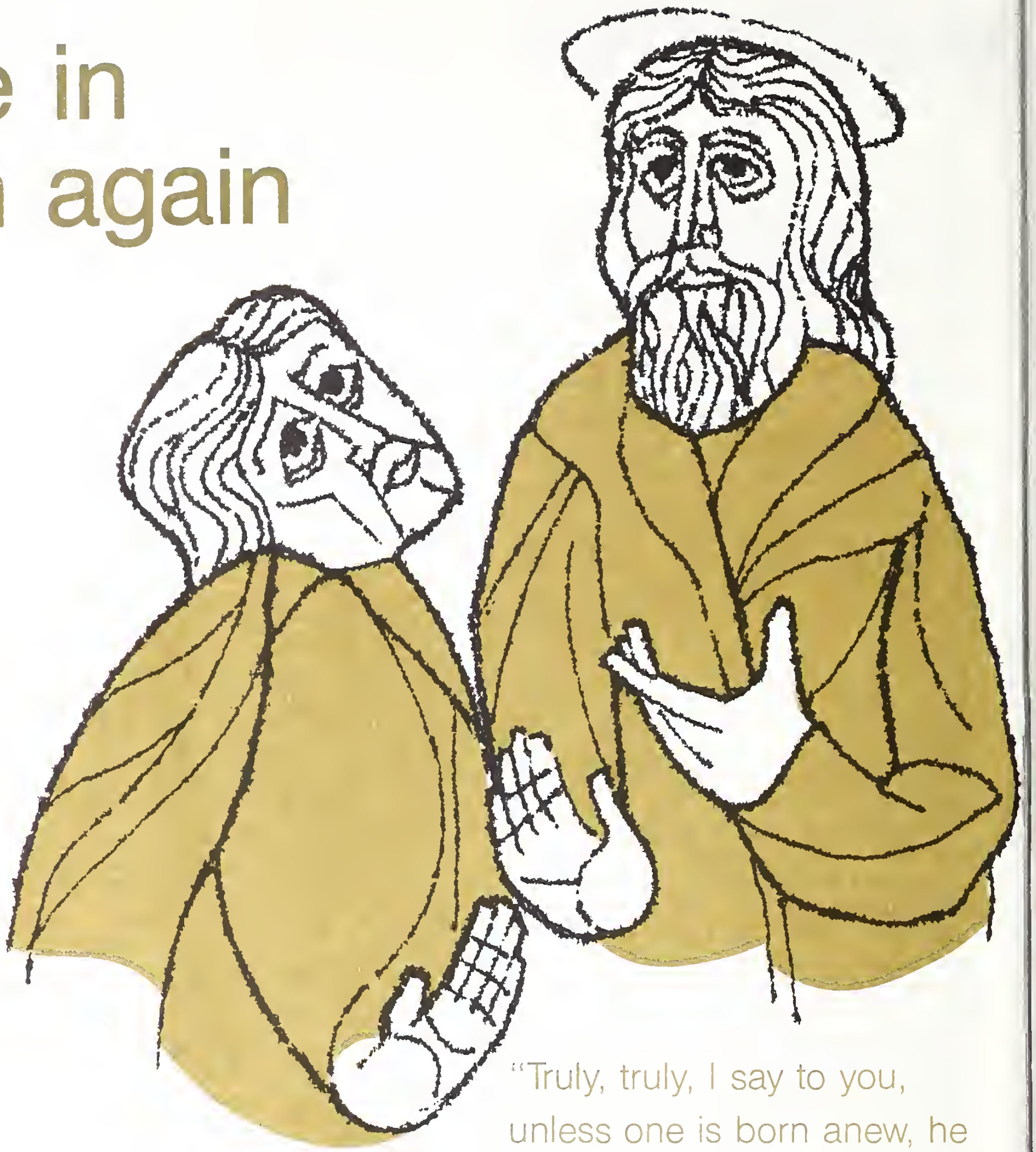
"When the church has ceased to be family, it has lost its power to communicate itself," says Richard Rohr, a leader of a religious community in Cincinnati. But when we as faith families find "a new way of relating, a way of supporting one another, of speaking to one another, of laying down our lives together and carrying the cross together, then hope is possible. Hope is not possible alone. Hope is the act of community. Someone has to walk with us in the journey of faith to give us hope."

You too, like our friend, can choose to parent all the children of your faith family. You can choose to love each other by moving beyond simplistic, magical answers to family problems. You can choose to build on family strengths and build God's family. •

We believe in being born again

(Foundations for our faith—7)

Helmut Harder



"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 3:3 RSV

The terms "new birth" and "born again" are used more than any other expressions to speak of the Christian's spiritual experience. Usually they focus on the initial act of receiving forgiveness for sins and becoming a Christian. The brief study that follows will show that the Bible uses these phrases to point not only to this initial act of the Christian life but also to one's ongoing Christian experience and even to the final renewal experience: resurrection from death. References to the new birth are found in three places in the New Testament: in John 3, in 1 Peter 1 and in several places in 1 John. Each of these texts makes its own contribution to our understanding.

Born of the Spirit. In John 3 Jesus is conversing with Nicodemus, a Jew by birth and a law-abiding Pharisee by religious conviction. Jesus tells him he must be "born again" (v. 3), that he must be "born of the Spirit" (v. 8). Here the new birth or the second birth is set over against two inter-related first births: natural birth into the Jewish family and religious birth into the way of the law. Jesus says to Nicodemus that neither of these gives entrance into Jesus' way. By natural birth one enters into a family heritage but not into the kingdom of God. By Jewish religious birth one enters into the way of the law and legalism but not into the life of the Spirit. In order to possess life in Christ a new birth is required, even for a religious adult such as Nicodemus.

New birth, as in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, speaks to us in several ways. First, we must not rely upon natural heritage and family connections for our identification as believers in Christ. Regardless of how dedicated our parents might have been to Christ, our faith cannot simply be an extension of theirs. Our natural family connections do not suffice for making us Christian. It is necessary to be "born again."

Second, as Christian believers we sometimes become quite zealous. We find ourselves clinging to a set of regulations or a set of doctrines. These become more important to us than a living relationship with God. If and when this happens, we are not too different from Nicodemus in his relationship with God. At such times we too need to be born again of the Spirit. This requires that we return once more to the original beginning we made with Christ. This experience of rededication and renewal is akin to the new birth Jesus was calling Nicodemus to experience.

Both of the problems mentioned above, the temptation to rely for one's salvation upon a strong natural heritage and the temptation to become all too religious in one's Christian zeal are familiar to Mennonites. We take our family ties seriously, and for the most part we take our religious faith seriously. While this is mainly a positive characteristic, it can also get the better of us. We need to emphasize the invitation to "be born again" in the face of the temptation to rely upon a strong Christian family heritage. And we need to emphasize the experience of adult renewal in the face of the

"The image of new birth serves as a constant reminder that we are children of God."

temptation to attach ourselves to some religious conception of Christian faith rather than to a personal embrace of Jesus Christ.

Born of imperishable seed. In 1 Peter the writer is addressing Christians who are suffering for their faith. In the face of the threat of death they are asking for some words of direction and assurance. In the introductory paragraphs of the letter the apostle calls his readers to fix their hope on the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection proclaims that Jesus Christ energizes his followers with living seed, not with dying seed. Those who believe in Christ "have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable. . ." (1:23).

Here the new birth is again contrasted with our first birth, but the point is that whereas the life that we possess by way of our natural birth ends in physical death, the life we gain by way of our spiritual second birth assures us of imperishable eternal life. Thus "he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1:3). In 1 Peter 1 the new birth links us with the resurrection of Christ and in this way provides assurance of immortality.

Sometimes Christians say the new birth deserves only a one-time emphasis; that it serves to provide our entrance into Christian faith and life but has no continuing function. The references to new birth in 1 Peter suggest otherwise. Here the imagery of the new birth gains its meaning mainly from the resurrection of Christ, and it provides a foundation, in that connection, with the Christian hope of eternal life. In fact, our resurrection from the dead to eternal life is included in the Christian experience of new birth. Our resurrection will be our final renewal experience.

Born to love. In 1 John the imagery of birth is applied in still another way. The characteristic expression found here is not "born again" or "new birth" but "born of God." This phrase occurs four times (4:7, 5:1, 4, 18), and the phrase "born of God's Spirit" occurs once (3:9).

Throughout the letter these references to spiritual birth are surrounded with ethical references. Those who are "born of God" will cease from sinning (3:9, 5:18); they will love one another (4:7); they will obey God's commandments (5:1ff); they will overcome the world (5:4). Here the emphasis is clearly upon the walk of discipleship.

The depiction of believers as "born of God" is another way of saying that God is our Father (1 John 1:3), that we are children of God (5:19) and that we are brothers and sisters of one another (5:16). Within this family relationship we are called to love one another as God loves us in Christ. Those who do right and love one another are children of God; those who do not do right and hate one another are children of the devil (see 5:7-10).

This text conveys the truth that the new birth expresses itself as a continuing dynamic and vital presence in the life of the believer. The image of new birth serves as a constant reminder that we are children of God. This awareness affects our relationships with believers and with unbelievers. The emphasis on 1 John reminds us of Menno Simons' characterization of the Christian life as "walking in the resurrection."

Summary. From this brief study we conclude that the spiritual teaching concerning new birth has broad application to Christian life. First, the new birth stands at the beginning of the Christian walk as a conscious and accountable step of faith. This step includes confessing sinfulness and dying to self. Sometimes this is experienced as a dramatic one-time step. At other times such rebirth is gradual. In any case the crucial point is that the individual makes a commitment to depend fully upon Jesus Christ for salvation and not upon the natural self.

Second, the new birth points to the resurrection. As such it provides the foundation for the Christian hope of eternal life in the face of suffering and death. In this way the affirmation of new birth helps us to stand firm and to resist fear and discouragement.

Third, the new birth serves as a confident reminder that we are born of God. As such we are loved as God's children and are called in turn to love all people. The new birth is a spiritual reality that permeates our relationship to God and to others with love.

The new birth is a practical experience that supports the Christian pilgrimage at every step of the way. It provides entrance to the Christian faith initially; it characterizes the life of discipleship; and it depicts the resurrection experience beyond death.

Postscript. Some Christians tend to neglect the biblical teaching on the new birth. They must be encouraged to keep this vital theme alive in their confession of faith. Other Christians tend to focus the new birth too narrowly, seeing it only in terms of a one-time decision. The biblical teaching on the new birth includes this dimension but also provides a broad and rich basis for the entire Christian life. We need not divide over this issue if we follow the Bible. •

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Love and discipline your children

Paula Diller Lehman

In our society, family is the primary level of community life. Whether it is a single-parent family, blended family, traditional or extended, we live, function and relate within the family unit. Our Christianity assumes community life. We read in Acts the account of believers "who broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people." We do not read much about the children. We do know that entire households were saved. We can assume they included children. We also do not read a lot of specific teachings within God's Word about how to include, train, nurture children within the family or the larger church community.

If we look to the example set by Jesus, we see him reaching out to children. "Let the little children come unto me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:13f). Jesus gave children respect and self-worth. He included them as important people for understanding the kingdom of God. To Jesus all were equal in worth—including women and children. Jesus touched the lives of people in transforming ways. He healed broken lives. He brought new life and new ways of relating within the family and the believing community.

How do we become better families? Through love. We show this love by caring for and healing each other. We forgive one another and become reconciled one to another. It is within the practical everyday ways of learning to love each through caring and respecting each other. If we wish to guide our children, we must provide a home and church environment that resembles the "good news" community. We must include our children in our worship, prayer, study and gift discernment. Children are important to the church.

My current occupation calls me to be with teenagers—your children. I hear about and see their struggles and joys within the family community. Many struggles include family problems such as divorce, conflict and lack of family unity. I am acutely aware of the national statistics of teen suicides, teen pregnancies and drug-related problems. Our children are not beyond the touch of these statistics.

I have also listened to parents and youth workers talk about the disappointments of young people who are not honest with them, of youth who seem to be uncaring, apathetic and self-indulged.

We must spend time with our children. There are no shortcuts.

Where is the good news? Obviously there is not much said in the Bible about adolescence. It did not exist in the first century. Adolescence is a 19th-century labeling of the years when a child works toward adulthood. Mary, the mother of Jesus, would today be a part of our national statistic of teen pregnancy. Times are different. However, I believe God's Word can shed light on this path of concern.

Deuteronomy 11:18-20 says, "Fix those words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home, when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that your Lord swore to give to your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth." We must talk to our children. We cannot leave it to the television. We must take the teachable moments. We must spend time with our children. There are no shortcuts.

Children are learning much from the media about life. It often involves sexual overtones and violence. It creates life situations of using people to meet one's own needs. Society leaves little unsaid or unseen for our children. The church, including parents, must help youth cope, to not be of this world and to somehow make sense of life issues.

Paul says in Ephesians 6:4, "Fathers do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." Proverbs says that if we love our children we will discipline them. In David Elkind's book *All Grown Up and No Place to Go* he urges parents to assert parental authority, not adult power. I think this concurs with the biblical mandate. Adults have the experience, knowledge and skills to help teach, train and guide our children. Too often we mistake adult power for authority. We cannot force, push or coerce our children into responsible adulthood. We can guide, instruct and discipline them on their journey.

Fear of losing control keeps us using power and pressure to get appropriate behavior. Instead, let's use persistent loving authority to guide, build and strengthen. Fear of our own shortcomings often keeps us from talking to our children.

Current research shows young people want to talk to their parents about issues of concern. It is also evident that teenagers value their parents' opinions. Are we taking the opportunity to listen to our teenagers? Are we showing them we care about what they are doing? Are we including them as important members of the family and in the life of the church? We are sometimes much concerned about our young people growing up and leaving the church. But we are not so concerned as to involve them or help them feel included.

Jesus calls us to reflect God's love and discipline to each other and to our children. Our children need us and we, as the church, need them. Let us commit ourselves to this important task of reflecting love and discipline to our children.

Paula Diller Lehman is the General Conference secretary for youth education.

The unusual man (Lamentations 3)

Monty Ledford

With chapter three we are virtually in a different country altogether. Here we do not hear of the sufferings of a people but of an individual—a man—and not the female Jerusalem or "daughter of Zion." What is more, unlike the sufferings of Jerusalem, this man's sufferings are "without cause" (v. 52). He was walking along on the path of life when the Lord himself "dragged me from the path and mangled me" (v. 10). These so intensely personal sufferings remind us of the book of Job and of many Psalms. The writer places this poem, so different in tone, right at the center and makes this the longest poem in the cycle that makes up *Lamentations.* It is the centerpiece of the book.

There are a number of amazing things in this man's experience which make some of chapter 3 an oasis in a desert of mourning. We hear the words "I have hope" (v. 21). Are there any words more wonderful than those in a life full of tragedy?

How is it that you have hope? Because of the Lord's great love. But is that enough? It is if "the Lord is my portion." John Calvin on this verse: "We cannot stand firm in adversities except we be content with God alone and his favor." From this satisfaction in God come the words of that great hymn, based on vv. 22-23, "Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father."

But what of the rod (v. 1), the wall (v. 7), the blocks of stone (v. 9)? "They are heavy, but they have become a yoke that a man can bear" (v. 27).

The most amazing thing is yet to come. This remarkable man, who has broken through to hope through his trust in God, does not himself admit to any sin calling for the treatment he has gotten. Instead, when he asks, "Why should any living man complain when punished for his sins?" he answers himself, not by confessing his own sins but by appealing to his people to confess theirs (v. 40).

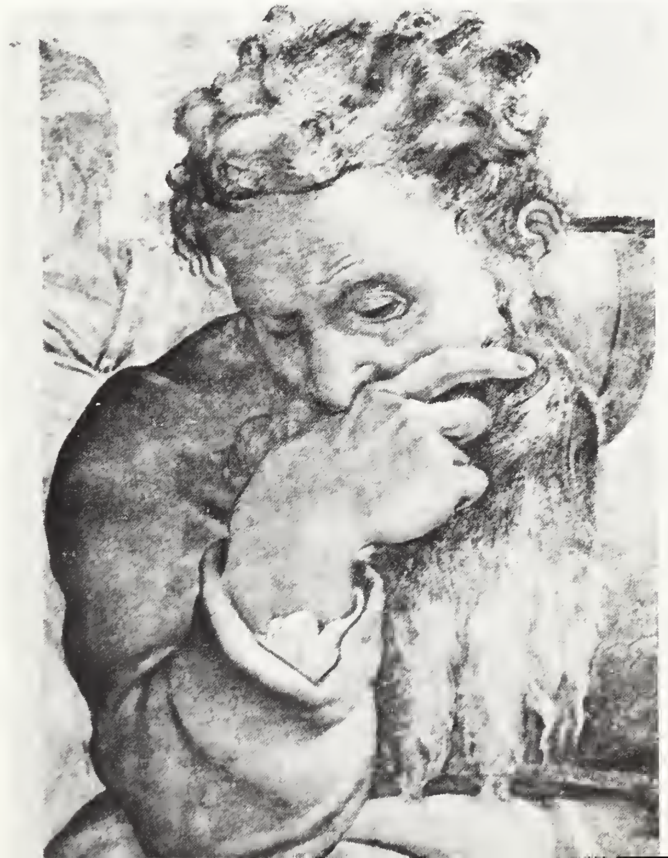
He identifies with them ("Let us say we have sinned"). He attempts to lead them in confession, to prime the pump, so to speak. It is this deep identification with his suffering people, this ability to place himself in their blood-stained shoes, that reminds us most of Jeremiah, the poet's mentor. It is also this that points to a man who lived 500 years later, who also took his place with a sinful people in the waters of baptism not for his own sin but to set out on the path of identification that would lead to rejection by his people and death. The writer of Lamentations 3 experiences the same thing. For all his tears of agony (v. 48), it is his people's hatred he receives (v. 14, v. 52). And it must be this way, mustn't it?

God forgives the repentant sinner, surely. But what if the sinner, what if the entire sinful people refuse to acknowledge sin? Is there then no hope for mercy? If the people are to be forgiven, someone must stand among the sinful people and appeal in their name for mercy. The innocent sufferer becomes the voice of the guilty people. The return: His people reject him.

Outside of Isaiah's "Servant Songs" I don't believe we have a more poignant foreshadowing of what Jesus was to experience than Lamentations 3. Verses 58-66 then bring us up short. Perhaps chapter 3 is not an adumbration of Christ's sufferings? Perhaps the lonely innocent sufferer of chapter 3 just could not make it up that last hill into the New Covenant but finally broke down into Old Covenant curses? Neither answer will do, for neither does justice to the coming of Christ.

With the coming of Jesus we see Lamentations 3 fulfilled in two ways. First, Jesus makes an even more agonizing identification with his sinful people—even a substitution. He suffers the full measure of God's wrath. His even more complete submission to his Father's will enables him to pray, "Father, forgive them," where our poet prayed, "Pay them back." Yet if we are to be faithful to the New Testament we must admit that Christ's suffering and forgiveness do not exhaust the message of the curses. The curses of chapter 3 remind us of those most potent Psalms, 69 and 109, where curses, the apostles tell us, come down in full force on the "others" who were "hardened" in impenitence (Romans 11:7-10)—of whom Judas Iscariot is the prototype (Acts 1:20). Ultimately either Jesus will bear our curse or we will bear it. That is the awesome result of our choice. *Fourth in a series*

Monty Ledford, 11 Dean N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505, is pastor at North Park Mennonite Church.



"Prophet Jeremiah" by Michelangelo

Will our faith have children?

Rosella Wiens Regier

About 10 years ago John Westerhoff III wrote a book, *Will Your Children Have Faith?* In a recent lecture series Westerhoff intimated that the question in the mid-'80s may be, "Will our faith have children?"

How do children gain a sense of belonging? Do adults consider them part of the family of God? What are practical ways we can involve children and young people in the congregation?

All of us think about these questions. Parents are uncomfortable the first time a child raises questions about church attendance. We are concerned when young people make choices that do not include parental and church values. The church is empty and people are lonely without families who have children and young people. These situations pose a third idea: *What is our faith without children?*

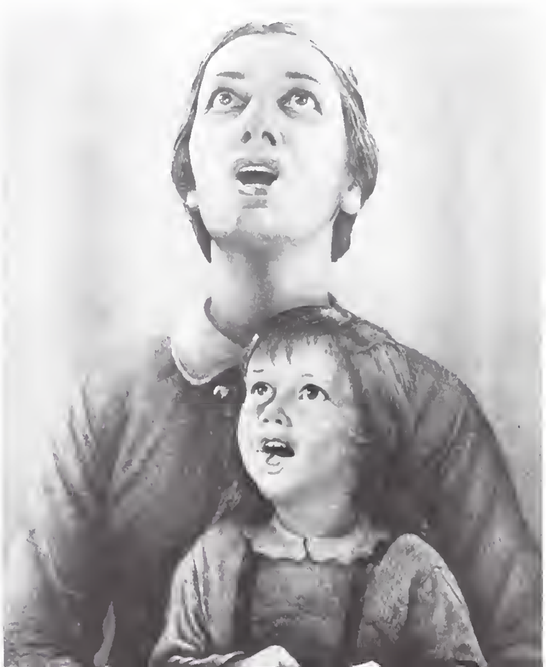
There are responses we can make individually and as a body of believers.

1. Tell the stories to the children. During one of Moses' long talks with the children of Israel on their way to the Promised Land he posed a hypothetical situation. "When your children ask you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances which the Lord our God has commanded you?' then you shall say. . ." (Deuteronomy 6:20). Moses illustrates his point by recounting the ways God led them as a people. Tell the stories, he said. Tell your children how God has moved and has acted in our lives, how he has led us in the past and how we experience him now.

Children become familiar with the stories we choose to share as they experience them personally with us, as they hear them told and as they expect them to be a part of their lives. As they relate to adults, as they hear the stories over and over, they are drawn into them with personal responses. Faith shared in this way becomes a mutual experience. *For Parents* (January/February 1986 issue) suggests that groups might play a game called "I remember when. . . ." Invite participants to recall a childhood experience, a happy time at church last year, a favorite Sunday school teacher, a family crisis. By sharing stories we are interwoven into the past, present and future.

2. Form relationships with children. It is easy to attend worship services, to talk with people of our age groups or to relate to the adults in our Sunday school classes. It is more difficult to foster caring relationships with children in the congregation. Adults must be intentional about talking with children, being interested in their lives, including them during worship and learning to know at least one child on a personal level. All of us, especially the children, need the affirmation of individuals, other than parents, to notice, affirm and relate to them.

Artist Guy Rowe has done this striking presentation of "God Is Our Refuge." It is a reminder to celebrate our faith intergenerationally.



We could create experiences where small intergenerational groups can learn to know each other—grandparents in the nursery, men teaching children's classes, families singing together, inviting someone else's child to sit with you during worship, Sunday school classes of different age groups going on picnics. The astounding discovery for adults is that we notice how much we need relationships with children.

3. Feature special times with the children. Occasionally, it is important to devote quality time to celebrate the children in the midst of the congregational family. It might be a children's day festival, a Sunday school picnic, a children's story time during worship or a night of games at the church. Other times individual children can feel important by helping with offerings, ushering, the music, the story or a skit during worship. Groups of children might be asked to read Scripture, decorate the foyer bulletin board, make a banner or sing in the choir. Children feel important, needed and affirmed as they make contributions to our total life together as the family of God.

4. Include children in the ordinary rituals. The congregation at worship is one of the most powerful ways we can model for children a sense of what it means to be the body of Christ. As children observe adults praying, singing, listening, sharing, grieving, celebrating, supporting and affirming, they begin to sense with their hearts and their heads the meaning of faith and belief.

5. Enjoy the children. Children and all of us are made in the image of God. That is a message to be shouted from the housetops. Children are precious gifts to be nurtured. We must help children develop their sense of esteem, their sense of worth to us and to God. We do that as we listen to their stories, as we enjoy their contributions and as we foster caring relationships with them.

I believe our faith must have children, for what is our faith without them?

Rosella Wiens Regier is the Commission on Education secretary for children's education.

Family devotions

Worship experiences in families are as varied as the families that hold them. Some families set aside a special time each day and worship becomes a meaningful ritual. For other families, worship is most meaningful as they respond to special needs, occasions and events. Other families struggle because it is difficult to feel God present with them. For some families, all of life is celebration and a total response to God.

However your family chooses to worship together, sometime try creating a litany. A litany is really a prayer led by one person with a variety of responses by the group. Litanies can be planned in advance or can be created on the spur of the moment. They should be simple enough so that group response is easily remembered as the family responds in unison.

Here is an example: *A springtime (or any season) prayer.* Ask each person in the family to think of one thing for which he or she is thankful. In turn, with eyes open to God, repeat the following sequence until all have had an opportunity to lead once or several times.

John: "For cool green grass . . ."
All: "We thank you, God."
Anne: "For red and yellow tulips."
All: "We thank you, God."

The litany continues until there are no more offerings. Then the leader closes with "Amen."

Another important part of family devotions or worship is the telling of the good news—the biblical story. It is also important to tell our story of how God is working in our lives. Too often we do not take the time to share our stories. Here are some practical ways to help us tell our stories:

1. Create a picture album or scrapbook for each child to remember special events. Help your child reflect on how these events make up the Christian life.
2. Invite grandparents to share stories at special occasions, particularly stories about how God has worked through them. Record these stories on cassette if possible.
3. Make a family tree as a project. Try to find out interesting faith stories from the past. Do some digging in your church records to find some significant moments of faith in the life of your congregation.
4. Put stories to music or in skit form to share with other family members at reunions.

You may have many more ideas. The important thing is to keep telling the stories of good news.

Often our most meaningful family worship times have not been during planned devotions or Bible reading but at times of other significant events. At times it's a part of one-to-one bedtime prayers or it will happen in the car. My daughter will turn off the radio and say, "Mom, we've got to talk." And she will share a problem or concern from school. Sometimes it evokes discussion. Sometimes a prayer concern. Sometimes silence. But how one responds can become part of a meaningful worship time for the family.

A helpful resource to enrich and affirm your family worship is *Creative Family Worship* by Ardys and Palmer Becker, available from Faith and Life Press. In a supportive way it helps you see some of the ways you are already loving your children—as foundation for family worship.

The Commission on Education staff put their heads together and corporately wrote this article.

Here is the COE "family" that created this article on family devotions. Front (left to right): Maynard Shelly, Randy Krehbiel, Susan Janzen, John W. Sprunger, Paula Lehman; back: Rosella Regier, Myrna Krehbiel, Dick Rempel

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Latin American workshop

Latin American workshop in Bogotá, Colombia, July 6-Aug. 4. Observation, experience, analysis and interpretation of Latin American reality from a Christian commitment to liberation. The cost for this ninth workshop is $649, sponsored by Program of Conscientization for North Americans (PCNA).

Contact:
Paul E. Stucky, coordinator
1614 Market
Galveston, TX 77550
(409) 762-1391.

Pastor needed

Hope Mennonite Fellowship, North Battleford, Sask., seeks the services of a pastor who has an interest in growing with a small, active congregation and reaching out to the neighborhood.

Please submit resumes to:
Pulpit Committee
1901-96th St.
North Battleford, SK S9A 0J3.

Strong ties between police officers and Ku Klux Klan organizations in a number of American cities has been uncovered by staff members of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Meanwhile, fire bombings of homes of blacks continues. Robert and Martha Marshall of Louisville, Ky., had to return to their old home after two fire bombings of their home in an all-white neighborhood there.

While ecologists in the West congratulate themselves on minor recycling achievements, Calcutta, a poor city in the Far East, leads the world with its massive and productive waste-management scheme. Garbage dumped on the city's streets and sidewalks becomes the soil on which 150 metric tons of vegetables are raised. A retinue of garbage pickers extract from discarded refuse all the materials that could be recycled. What remains—a mixture of potash and vegetable sludge—is scooped up by city trucks and taken to a vast garden of some 23,500 acres that produces most of the vegetables for this city of 10 million.

NEWS

To be one conference by 1988

Ontario Mennonites plan integration

Waterloo, Ont.—"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ . . ." were the opening words of Ed Janzen, moderator, as the Conference of United Mennonite Churches in Ontario gathered here March 15. The conference coincided with the larger Inter-Mennonite Conference, which was taking place during the same time, and the topic of inter-Mennonite cooperation, or integration, dominated the sessions.

Elected to the various conference committees were Arno Bartel as vice chair; Alfred Willms, Edna Mensch and Don Whitehead, missions and service committee; Adelaide Fransen and Henry Hildebrandt, education committee; Werner Fast, program committee; Bill W. Dick, Conrad Grebel College committee; and Henry Koop, finance committee. Ann Martin was appointed conference treasurer. A 1986 budget of $363,000 was accepted.

Regarding integration with the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference (WOMC) and the Mennonite Conference of Ontario and Quebec (MCOQ), 95 percent were in favor. Some were concerned that a greater theological rationale be provided for the churches before the three conferences become one in 1988.

Historically, the idea of inter-Mennonite cooperation is not new among the Mennonites in Ontario. The three groups, as well as several others, have had jointly organized activities and projects for over 65 years. The Inter-Mennonite Conference, an executive body of representatives from all three groups (formed in 1974) made possible increasing cooperation in missions, Christian education and student services. For the past 12 years the IMC and the executives of the three groups have been working toward the integration. In 1985 the proposal for integration was discussed in regional and district meetings.

Out of a total of 485 votes, 463, or 95 percent, were in favor, and 22 were opposed to the idea of integration in principle. Out of a total of 484 votes, 453, or 94 percent, were in favor, and 31 were opposed to the proposed timetable for integration to be fully implemented.

Integration should become a reality by 1988, following this timetable:

December 1985: Integration study committee presented proposed model for integration to Inter-Mennonite Executive Committee for approval.

April-May: Refine and revise the model. Subcommittees begin work on legal and financial matters, relationships of committees and staff in more detail.

June or September: Inter-Mennonite Executive Committee approves the revised model.

September to December: Test with congregations, cluster meetings, committees and staff. Draft constitution and job descriptions.

January 1987: Approved by IEC, including what is then known about legal and financial implications.

March 1987: Delegates approve detailed model. Delegates approve constitution in principle with suggested modifications. Delegates approve outline, not details, of staff positions. Delegates approve March 1988 as transition to new structure.

Singing at youth sessions

April 1987-March 1988: Refinements, adjustments, transition team. Legalities set in place ready to go.

March 1988: First Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada annual meeting.

"Integration on a Mennonite Theme" was also the emphasis for the more than 150 youth registrants from all three church conferences, who gathered to hear David Martin, pastor at a Mennonite church in Toronto, speak on the topic "All in the Family." *Joel Wiebe*

All friends/former participants of
Arvada Mennonite Church
are encouraged to come for the
25th anniversary
Sunday, **July 6, 1986.**

Write to:
Anniversary
Arvada Mennonite Church
5927 Miller
Arvada, CO 80004.

In a study of 90 two-year-old boys and girls in groups of two in a homelike setting with their mothers nearby, actors simulated warm and friendly exchange, then a heated argument, then a friendly reconciliation. Analyzing videotapes, researchers found children more distressed by the heated argument, often freezing in place, crying, covering their eyes or ears. They were also more likely to hit, kick, push or take something from their playmate afterward. In a follow-up study one month later, children were even more upset and more aggressive following a second heated argument than they were the first time.

Jorge Valbuena, 11, suffered bad vision and had used glasses for five years. He also experienced progressive deafness. He attended the evangelistic and healing campaign organized by the Central Mennonite Church of Bogotá, Colombia, under the leadership of John Jairo Cano. When Jorge stepped forward for the prayer of healing, he fell to the floor. After two or three minutes he came to. He could suddenly hear well. The next day at home, as he read, he realized he didn't need his glasses. He continues to hear and see well.

Mitch Snyder and 11 other hunger strikers at the Community for Creative Non-Violence in Washington ended a 34-day fast recently after President Reagan pledged $5 million in federal funds to renovate an 800-bed shelter for the capital's homeless. The president also promised to turn the federally owned facility over to the District of Columbia government.

Regier named coordinator of Women in Mission

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—"I am excited and enthused about WM's involvement and activities. I see some significant accomplishments and good things happening," says Sara (Janzen) Regier, newly appointed coordinator for Women in Mission.

Regier grew up on a farm near Elbing, Kan. She is a graduate of Berean Academy, Elbing; Bethel College, and Bethel Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing, Newton. Her graduate work at Kansas State University was in family and child development.

With her husband, Fremont, Regier served with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Central Committee in Mexico, Zaire and Botswana. In Mexico (1961-1963) she taught health, nutrition and child care among Old Colony Mennonites. In Zaire (1965-1976) she worked in community development, teaching sewing, child care, health and nutrition classes; organizing and implementing leadership training seminars for women of the Zaire church; planning orientation and teaching language to new mission workers.

Most recently (1981-1985) Regier and her husband codirected Mennonite Ministries in Gabarone, Botswana. This involved the administration of a mission/development program for 30-40 workers.

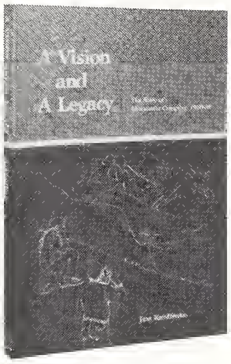
Sara and Fremont are the parents of three children, Charles, Heidi and Nathan. Regier begins her assignment with Women in Mission in August. She replaces Joan Wiebe, who will be moving to the Denver area with her husband, Leonard, to plant a Mennonite church.

Service coordinator needed

Service coordinator needed for **Mennonite Community Closet Outreach Program** at North Battleford, Sask. Position opens July 1 and is for a 2- to 3-year term. The major objective of the outreach program is to provide Christian counsel and support to needy people who come in contact with the Closet. Training in social work and experience working with people of Native ancestry an asset. Position ideal for a married couple, as one partner could work part time in the Closet Store. Honorarium D.O.E. and financial requirements.

Send resume to:
Mennonite Community Closet
1022 101st St.
North Battleford, SK S9A 0Z3.

A Vision and a Legacy



The Story of Mennonite Camping, 1920-80
by Jess Kauffman
Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kan.

"The value of *A Vision and a Legacy* lies not alone in the camping statistics, but also in the inspiration the reader gets from recalling personal camping experiences. Reading this book will hopefully inspire many a reader to return to serving in our camps with renewed enthusiasm generated by what is now history." —Roy Henry, *Mennonite Weekly Review*

A Vision and a Legacy is available from Mennonite Camping Association, Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515, at $7 per copy plus $1 shipping and handling.

Canadian orders should be addressed to: Camps with Meaning, 202-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2L9, at $8.75 per copy plus $1 shipping and handling.

Checks should be made out to Mennonite Camping Association.

Job openings

Director, **skill trainer** and **direct-care staff** are needed at **Oregon Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.**, (group homes for developmentally disabled adults).

Send inquiries to:
Jane Toews
Teaching Research
345 Monmouth Ave.
Monmouth, OR 97361
(503) 838-1220, ext. 401.

The Welcome Inn

Community Centre and Church,
Hamilton, Ont.,
invites you to their
20th anniversary celebration.

May 24
10 a.m.-1 p.m.—VS reunion brunch
2-8 p.m.—Open house and barbecue for everyone. Please join us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship.

May 25
10:30 a.m.—Worship service of thanksgiving—joint service with Hamilton Mennonite at Bennetto Auditorium.
12:30 p.m.—Potluck dinner at Welcome Inn

All friends of Welcome Inn
are invited to come for the weekend.

Challenge '86, "Church Camping as a Setting for Nurturing Families," was this year's theme for the Mennonite Camping Association biennial convention. It took place at Lakewood Retreat Center, Brooksville, Fla., March 24-27. John and Naomi Lederach were the guest resource people.

"Angels in Moscow" celebrated the importation of Russian Bible commentaries recently. "It is not often that the Russians refer to North Americans as 'angels,' but it was Russian Christmas Eve, so why not?" asks Peter Dyck. Dyck was speaking about the Jan. 6 celebration in Moscow of the importation of 5,000 Russian-language Barclay Bible commentaries to the Soviet Union. Mennonite Central Committee and Baptist World Alliance split the costs on the project.

"A critical self-examination of Mennonite experience, identity and task, especially as it pertains to the North American context." That is the ambitious goal of a conference on Mennonite self-understanding to be held at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont., May 28-31. Sponsored by the Mennonite Bicentennial Commission and CGC, the conference will feature a wide range of academic addresses with formal responses by Mennonite and non-Mennonite scholars. The purpose of the conference is to analyze the economic, cultural, philosophical and religious factors which have influenced the North American Mennonite world view.

Mennonite Health Association tackles tough issues

Small group responds to Joan Guntzelman's address.

Denver (Meetinghouse)—The Mennonite Health Association meeting here March 1-5 with the Brethren Homes and Hospital Association and the Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly, struggled with tough issues in health care today: affiliation for future survival, repairing/resourcing health-care workers under stress, accepting responsibility for life termination, examining differences between the health-care scenes in the United States and Canada. The theme for the larger Protestant Health and Welfare Assembly—in which the MHA meets as one of the denominational groupings in addition to PHWA sessions—was "Maximizing Resources—Whose Responsibility?"

Including 29 nursing students, 315 registered for the MHA convention. About 40 were from Canada.

In the keynote address to MHA, Joan Guntzelman, health-care consultant, said that three things are contributing to the stress upon care-givers: (1) Technologizing of medicine leads to focus on machines instead of on people. (2) Competition, especially in U.S. hospitals, where thousands of beds are empty, is turning health care into a business. This turns the focus from care to economic viability. (3) Acuity of care. Many care-givers today deal daily with issues of prolonging life and delaying death. These bring great stress upon the workers.

Guntzelman said these challenges must be addressed (1) by identifying and keeping our values clearly before the care-givers and care-receivers, (2) by choosing deliberately to serve people's needs rather than be economic competitors and (3) by acknowledging the stresses and providing "hardhats" for health-care givers.

Robert M. Veatch, Kennedy Institute of Ethical Studies, told the opening PHWA session (about 2,000 people) that the Protestant ethic says that all can think ethically.

Veatch named five ways he did not like to see health dollars spent: (1) for patient care that patients don't want, (2) for useless technological heroics, (3) for defensive medicine practices to protect from malpractice, (4) for care to people already in comatose states and (5) for care due to people's dangerous lifestyles voluntarily chosen.

In contrast, Veatch named five ways of health care he supports: (1) palliation for people in agony, (2) meeting the needs of those sickest among us, (3) preventive care, (4) extra spending to give the poor a fair shake and (5) a fair allocation for research.

John H. Redekop, professor of political science and moderator of the Mennonite Brethren Churches in Canada, replaced Jake Epp, Canada's Minister of Health, as the speaker at the annual Mennonite and Brethren banquet. Redekop analyzed health-care workers in Canada and the United States. He argued that U.S. Anabaptists are stronger "nationalists" but less active in government. Canadian Mennonites are less "national" but more active in government.

While U.S. Anabaptists basically accept health care as another entrepreneurial enterprise, Canadian Anabaptists find that security and logic leads them to trust in a national health-care policy. Canadians see government more like an "inefficient service agency" essentially helpful, while Americans tend to see government as an invader upon private turf—outside of God's kingdom.

The undercurrent of pressures upon the ongoing existence of health-care institutions seemed prevalent throughout the convention. Some wondered out loud about whether they'd still be around in a few years. With 145 different Mennonite and Brethren institutions represented at Denver, two task forces—one appointed by Mennonite Mental Health Services and one by MHA—reported on preliminary findings about future affiliations and new management possibilities. About 50 MHA members registered to stay an extra half day for a special seminar on affiliation of health-care institutions.

MHA reported a 1986 membership of 901, adopted a budget of $48,400, reappointed H. Ernest Bennett as executive director for 1987-89 and announced that the 1987 convention would be held March 14-18 at New Orleans on a theme related to the International Year of the Homeless. Dottie Kauffmann, Goshen, Ind., was installed as the new MHA president. *Bernie Wiebe*

The Dutch Mennonite Theological Seminary—oldest Mennonite seminary in the world—observed its 250th anniversary in December 1985 with a special program in Amsterdam. Sjouke Voolstra, who teaches Christian theology and ethics and Mennonite theology at the seminary, was the main speaker. He noted that Dutch Mennonites are celebrating two other dates during this period—the 450th anniversary of Menno Simons' conversion to Anabaptism and the 175th anniversary of the organization of the Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit (the Dutch Mennonite Conference).

Thirty summer service volunteers are needed by Mennonite Voluntary Service for short-term assignments. Summer service volunteers help local groups carry out special summer programs and provide assistance during times of staff transition. Summer assignments provide opportunities to gain field experience and encourage longer-term service or missions commitment. For information contact David Orr, MVS, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

The Church of the Brethren General Board has voted to divest "immediately" from all corporations or financial institutions involved in the Republic of South Africa. The decision prompted considerable debate because the denomination's annual conference is scheduled to respond in June to the issue of divestiture.

CoMoS looks at SCBI, Youth Farm

Thy
Kingdom
Come

Delmer and Elsie Epp, coordinators for the General Conference triennial sessions to be held in Saskatoon July 21-27.

Waldheim, Sask.—The 27th annual Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan convened at Zoar Mennonite Church here Feb. 28-March 1.

"Add to your faith . . . knowledge" (2 Peter 1:5) was not only the theme of the conference but a premonition of which program area would cause the most vigorous discussion. J. Herbert Fretz of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., spoke on 2 Peter 1 in three presentations: (1) This knowledge participates in the divine nature (vv. 1-4), (2) this knowledge ushers in ethical living (vv. 5-11), (3) the sources of this knowledge (vv. 12-21).

Henry H. Funk, conference pastor, indicated that half of the 46 CoMoS congregations have less than 100 members. Over a dozen congregations are looking for pastors or associates, and many of the present pastors will retire in the next few years, further exacerbating the already acute pastoral shortage.

The conference accepted three new congregations in its membership: Jubilee Mennonite, Swift Current; Peace Mennonite, Regina; Peace Mennonite, North Saskatoon.

The smooth-sailing conference first got stuck on the Rosthern Youth Farm issue. A task force appointed two years ago had spent much time and energy seeking out and evaluating proposals for use of Youth Farm land, ranging from using it for settling Native land claims to growing wheat for the Foodgrains Bank. It finally opted for a combination of activities including (1) a retirement village, (2) homes for disadvantaged youth, (3) market gardening project, (4) MCC service and development education training centre and (5) a Mennonite Heritage Centre. A membership society was to operate this diverse venture. After much struggle and the prospect of another $7,500 budget item this year, the ballot vote came out a tie, signifying the dividedness of the opinion and defeating the motion.

Pastor needed

Toronto United Mennonite Church (GC) invites applications for the position of full-time pastor. TUMC is an urban congregation (membership 159) with a lay team ministry and is actively involved in inter-Mennonite and other service projects. Applicants may be individuals or a couple sharing the pastorate. Duties begin in September. Experience is required.

For an information package please write to the chairman of the search committee:
Bob Tiessen
240 Scarlett Road
Apt. 1101
Toronto, ON M6N 4X4.

However, the service committee and the board of Mennonite Nursing Home, which is located on Youth Farm property, was granted permission to pursue the development of a retirement village on the same land and present detailed plans at next year's sessions.

Over and again people voiced support for Swift Current Bible Institute. But the capital debt exceeds $400,000, and the operating deficit grows. Added to this is an enrollment of only 42 students and an almost total turnover of faculty in the coming year. The low level of operating funds available to the school has resulted in a lack of teaching aids, faculty and staff salaries below the official poverty line, program and faculty and staff positions being cut again in the coming year, once again causing fewer students and fewer funds.

In an effort to respond to the situation, delegates voted a 10 percent increase to SCBI (approximately $37,900). That goodwill was shortlived as the motion was brought forward later and rescinded.

David Ortis, outgoing principal of SCBI, said, "Give us the tools and we will do the task." The tools, he said, are prayer, young people and money.

It was agreed that a mini-conference on SCBI would be held this year in order to further deal with recommendations in a task force report.

The budget discussion dragged on. The final budget accepted was $556,565.

Irvin Schmidt was re-elected chairperson and Henry V. Friesen vice chairperson. *Edmund Pries*

Assistant pastor needed

First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a full-time assistant pastor, commencing Sept. 1. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry and assisting with pulpit duties. Ability to give leadership in church music would be an asset.

For information or application contact:
Archie Epp, congregational chairman
1513 Argyle Ave.
Saskatoon, SK S7H 2W3
(306) 374-1516.

A revised church/college matching scholarship program was passed by the Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) board at its Feb. 27-March 1 meeting and will begin during the 1986-87 school year. It provides a 25 percent match from Bethel College to any Mennonite student whose church offers a scholarship. Currently 183 students from 37 congregations are receiving scholarships from their churches.

The question of Sunday store openings is being dealt with by both the politicians and the courts. Last spring the Canadian Supreme Court struck down the 1907 federal Lord's Day Act on the ground that it had a religious purpose and therefore violated the Charter of Rights. Now the Ontario Retail Sales Act, a provincial law which also deals with Sunday store openings, is also being challenged in the Supreme Court. A ruling is expected in the summer.

Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan has invited two major international gatherings to meet in May in the Taipei area. The Mennonite World Conference executive committee will hold its annual meetings May 7-14 at the Golden China Hotel in Taipei. One key topic is a review of MWC relations with the International Mennonite Peace Committee. This meeting will be followed by sessions of the III Asia Mennonite Conference May 14-18 at a retreat center outside the city, involving some 35 delegates from seven nations. They will focus on "Christian Discipleship in Asia Today."

Conversations on Faith III tackles 'inerrancy' question

Mt. Pleasant, Pa.—To be for "inerrancy" or not to be. That was the question—or at least one of them—at Conversations on Faith III March 5-7 at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center here.

The word that has sharply divided Southern Baptists and other evangelical groups popped up at the third annual event designed to bring Mennonites of various views together to discuss their differences. Called by the MC General Board, Conversations on Faith was a response to charges that the Mennonite Church is drifting away from its traditional beliefs.

The theme this year was "Biblical Interpretation," and the meeting opened with a historical overview on Mennonites and the Bible by historian J. C. Wenger (via videotape). Respondent Marlin Miller of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., noted that the word "inerrancy" has cropped up only once in official Mennonite documents—in 1921.

"Inerrancy" is used by fundamentalist Christians to describe the Bible as completely without error—at least in its original manuscripts (which have never been found). They say that the studies of modern biblical scholars have cast doubt on the veracity of the Bible.

Some Mennonites obviously share this view, as indicated by the "amens" to the criticism by Grand Rapids, Mich., pastor Monty Ledford that Mennonite seminary professors are undermining the trustworthiness of the Bible.

Seminary professors in attendance countered by saying that the inerrant approach to the Bible detracts from a fuller understanding of the intent and spirit of the Scriptures. "Does inerrancy mean that I'm supposed to believe that the earth has four corners, as the Old Testament says?" asked Dorothy Jean Weaver of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

The two viewpoints were argued by Otis Yoder and Paul Zehr in presentations on inspiration and authority. Yoder, a radio evangelist, espoused a "narrow" position, while Zehr, a Lancaster Conference leader, called for a more "open" position. Both men said they have a "high view" of the Bible.

An interesting—and lively—case study for biblical interpretation centered on the creation account in Genesis. Willard Mayer of Rosedale Bible Institute argued for the literal historical accuracy of the account, while Ron Guengerich of Hesston (Kan.) College said the ancient account is spiritual symbolism and not scientific analysis. "If I follow Ron's cosmology, I would understand the Bible better but wouldn't necessarily trust it," said retired Virginia Conference leader Linden Wenger in a comment that drew appreciative laughter at the end of a long discussion. "If I follow Willard's theory of inspiration, I would trust the Bible but wouldn't necessarily understand it."

In two other case studies, Don Jacobs, Ernest Martin, George Brunk III and Dan Yutzy showed various approaches to teaching and preaching on Acts 15 and Luke 24.

In the end, the "conservatives" seemed to concede that rigid words like inerrancy are not helpful, and the "liberals" agreed that their biblical scholarship must lead to deeper faith in the Bible. A member of the latter group proposed an alternative to inerrancy—"the Bible is truthful in all that it affirms." A member of the former group said that that wording "has some credibility."

Attendance at Conversations on Faith III was down—140 compared to about 200 at each of the previous two—but observers noted a good spirit and a trust in each other. *Steve Shenk*

Contributions
invited
to the
Frank H. Epp
Memorial
Scholarship Fund

Conrad Grebel College has established a scholarship fund in memory of Frank H. Epp, former president and professor of history, who passed away on Jan. 22. This fund is an opportunity for friends and colleagues to make an ongoing contribution to his memory. Your donation to the fund will be welcomed—in any amount. Tax-deductible receipts will be issued promptly.

Proceeds of the fund will be used to promote the study of Mennonites and other minorities—one of Frank's deep concerns and interests during his 30 years of writing and public speaking.

Send contributions to:
Conrad Grebel College
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

(Please mark your contribution: Frank H. Epp Memorial Scholarship Fund.)

President Reagan wants workfare instituted throughout the country because he thinks it can cut welfare spending. He has improvised a set of extravagant and unfounded claims about the workfare program he operated as governor of California in the early '70s, says the American Friends Service Committee. According to Reagan, 76,000 people were placed in private jobs by this program. According to state records, however, only 8,000 people were enrolled during the three-year life of the program; California officials say they have no idea how many of these people may have found jobs as a result.

"The Confessing Church in America" will be the topic of a Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section assembly planned for April 25-26 in Wichita, Kan. The assembly's subtitle is "Conscientious Objection to Conscription of the Heart and Mind." Keynote speaker will be George Hunsinger, Presbyterian professor of theology at Bangor (Maine) Theological Seminary.

World Evangelical Fellowship has decided to move its headquarters from Wheaton, Ill., to an international center. Singapore was provisionally selected as the new site, and November was set as the target date for the move. WEF will retain offices in Wheaton and in Europe.

Evangelism campaign in Zaire yields Christian commitment

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Donovan G. and Naomi Reimer Unruh, General Conference missionaries in Zaire, recently participated in a 24-day evangelism campaign in Kahemba, Zaire, in the southeastern part of Bandundu, near the Angolan border. Over 1,051 people made a public commitment to Christ.

The campaign was conducted by a 12-member team. Unruh, as coordinator for Theological Education by Extension (TEE) for the Mennonite Church of Zaire, arranged the venture.

The expedition assembled at Kikwit and traveled together to Kahemba, completing the 215-mile trip in 20 hours. The evangelism team established headquarters in a local hotel and prepared for the opening session of the campaign the next day by fasting and praying. Don Unruh notes that "it was not unusual to have as many as two to three people fasting a day during the duration of the campaign."

The team members' days began and ended with prayer and meditation sessions, often lasting over an hour. They also engaged in group Bible study of Daniel and Acts.

The sessions were divided into morning and afternoon services. Morning sessions were devoted to teaching witnessing skills and how to use the tools of evangelism, and afternoon sessions dealt with God, Christ and salvation.

Unruh, Pastor Mutshikani and Mputu Matanda shared the primary teaching duties for the campaign. Gipaka Gilangu of the TEE program translated the services and other messages into Kituba. The other team members served as counselors.

Turnout at the sessions was consistently strong, with 1,111 people attending the first session and an average daily attendance of around 655 people. The team preached to at least 10,150 people during the campaign. In addition to those making a public commitment to Christ, others spoke of taking new spiritual directions.

Attendance at the sessions increased daily as a result of personal and public testimony. One new convert, Brother Mabanza, gave testimony that after he made his commitment to Christ, the Spirit would not leave him alone until he resolved an outstanding quarrel with his prospective father-in-law. Unruh observes that this incident happened before the team had even begun to talk about forgiveness being connected to restoration of human relationships.

On Sundays the team preached in the local open-air marketplace to large crowds of about 2,500 people each week. Many of these people later attended the weekday morning and evening sessions. The original plan to conduct witnessing-technique seminars in the weekday morning sessions was replaced with affirming sessions that helped new converts understand the decision they had made for Christ.

Women at evangelistic meeting in Zaire

Unruh reports some persistent problems in the Kahemba church community that hinder spiritual growth. Many marriages and family relationships are in disorder, largely as the result of divorce and unfaithfulness. Also many people still believe in witchcraft, magic, fatal curses and fetishes for protection against supernatural attacks. During the revival campaign numerous fetishes and amulets were relinquished and burned.

The campaign concluded with the baptism of 76 adults. Some of these believers had been earlier baptized in the Catholic church but asked to be rebaptized upon knowledge of Christ and public confession of faith. Unruh notes that many more people asked to be baptized, but he and the other pastors refused to baptize those people who lived together outside of marriage or who came from polygamous marriages.

Unruh and Gipaka Gilangu also organized TEE Bible-study classes in Kahemba, Kamayal and Bindu. Current lessons are about the book of Acts. These classes mark the first time in four years that Mennonites visited the area with TEE literature and affirmed contact with the people of Kahemba, who as an isolated minority tribe often feel neglected by the Mennonite community of Zaire's central administration. *David Sprunger*

MCC openings

Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., has immediate employment opportunities for an experienced secretary in MCC Peace Section and for an administrative assistant in Information Services. Also coming up in spring and summer are openings for secretaries, receptionist and administrative assistants.

For more information contact:
MCC Personnel Services
Box M
Akron, PA 17501
(717) 859-1151;
or
MCC Canada
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8
(204) 475-3550.

"We want to wear out, not rust out," say Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers Howard and Miriam Headings of West Liberty, Ohio. This is their third winter of packing up their van and traveling around the United States, doing home repair and renovation until spring. "It used to be that mom and dad were home, wondering where the kids were," muses Howard. "Now the kids are home wondering where their parents are."

Organizations in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, begun with the help of Mennonite Central Committee Canada, have helped as many as 500 southern Saskatchewan farmers—and their livestock—make it through the winter. Hay, straw, feed grains and cash was provided by donors in northern Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta and distributed to farmers in parts of Saskatchewan badly affected by last year's drought and insect plagues.

Denver Opportunity for Outreach and Reflection (DOOR) offers church and college groups and families a chance to serve in Denver for a holiday, weekend or week, cleaning and repairing homes and churches. DOOR participants will meet with people who live and work in the inner city and talk about the meaning of Christian service, urban life and human needs in the city. DOOR is sponsored by Mennonite Urban Ministry, the Christian service organization of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Denver. Contact Mennonite Urban Ministry, 430 W. Ninth Ave., Denver, CO 80204, (303) 892-1039.

CALENDAR

May 15-18—Festival of Worship, Goshen, Ind.

July 21-27—General Conference triennial sessions, Saskatoon, theme: "Thy Kingdom Come"

Sept. 25-28—Aid to Christian Teaching, Whiting, N.J.

Canada

July 4-8—Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Waterloo, Ont.

Eastern

May 1-4—Eastern District Conference, Bedminster, Pa.

Northern

June 12-15—Northern District Conference, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Pacific

June 19-22—Pacific District Conference, Aurora, Ore.

Western

Oct. 17-19—Western District Conference, Wichita, Kansas

MINISTERS

Claude Boyer, pastor at First Church, Reedley, Calif., resigned effective in June. Beginning in July he will be pastor at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Walter Braun, pastor at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, resigned effective in August.

Robert Coon, pastor at Deer Creek (Okla.) Church, resigned effective in August, after which he will begin pastoring at Turpin (Okla.) Church.

Rodney Crowell became pastor at Emmaus Church, Whitewater, Kan., this month.

Steve Estes is serving as interim pastor at Bethel Church, Pekin, Ill. He continues as pastor at Boynton Church, Hopedale, Ill.

Elmer Friesen resigned as pastor at Glendale Church, Lynden, Wash., effective in September.

Larry Grunden is serving as interim pastor at Trenton (Ohio) Church.

Ulli Klemm began serving as pastor on a half-time basis at Manor Community Church, Chicago, Jan. 1.

Gary Martin, pastor at Manor Community Church, Chicago, resigned effective this summer.

R. Herbert Minnich began serving as pastor at Inter-Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan., in February.

Urbane Peachy will serve as pastor at Akron (Pa.) Church effective in September.

Robert Shreiner resigned as pastor at Hyattsville (Md.) Church effective in July.

Dennis Stutzman has begun serving as youth pastor at First Church, Berne, Ind.

Mei-Li Warmkessel was licensed to the ministry March 9 and serves as assistant pastor to Adam Liu at Santa Clara (Calif.) Church.

Paul Wikerd resigned as pastor at Bethel Church, Lancaster, Pa., effective in December.

Calvin Yoder will begin serving as assistant pastor at Zion Church, Souderton, Pa., effective in June.

John Hess Yoder resigned as pastor at Peace Church, Portland, Ore., effective in May.

WORKERS

Paul W. Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va., and *Norman Maust*, Goshen, Ind., have been named regional managers by Mennonite Mutual Aid. Brunk will supervise community representatives—mutual aid counselors—in the eastern United States. Maust will supervise counselors in the central United States.

Polle

Rinner

Martha F. Graber, North Newton, Kan., has resigned as director of Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging.

Larry Hills, Commission on Overseas Mission worker, returned to the Transkei, Southern Africa, Jan. 29 to resume his work in Bible teaching and leadership training among the Africa Independent Churches.

David Kratowicz has joined Great Lakes Choice Books as its director.

Bluffton (Ohio) College has announced two appointments: *Richard K. MacMaster* will be associate professor of history for the 1986-87 academic year; *Margie Closson* became director of financial aid March 1.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College has appointed *Sig Polle* and *Lois Edmund* as assistant professors in practical theology effective July 1.

Esther Lehrman Rinner, administrative assistant in the Commission on Home Ministries, resigned March 14, completing 15 years with CHM.

Harriet and *LaVerne Rutschman*, COM workers, have begun two-year terms on the staff at Latin America

A Fesitval of Worship sponsored by the General Conference, the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonite Church will be held May 15-18 at Goshen (Ind.) College. Donald Hustad, former organist for Billy Graham now teaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., is the keynote speaker. The festival's theme, "An Exploration into the Meaning and Practice of Worship," will be carried out through experiencing worship, biblical studies and more than 40 workshops. Registration fee before April 15 is $35. After April 15 it is $40. Write to Festival of Worship, Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515.

RECORD

Biblical Seminary in Costa Rica.

David Schertz is the new administrator of Mennonite Hospital, Bloomington, Ill.

A defense against cancer can be cooked up in your kitchen.

There is evidence that diet and cancer are related. Follow these modifications in your daily diet to reduce chances of getting cancer:

1. Eat more high-fiber foods such as fruits and vegetables and whole-grain cereals.
2. Include dark green and deep yellow fruits and vegetables rich in vitamins A and C.
3. Include cabbage, broccoli, brussels sprouts, kohlrabi and cauliflower.
4. Be moderate in consumption of salt-cured, smoked, and nitrite-cured foods.
5. Cut down on total fat intake from animal sources and fats and oils.
6. Avoid obesity.
7. Be moderate in consumption of alcoholic beverages.

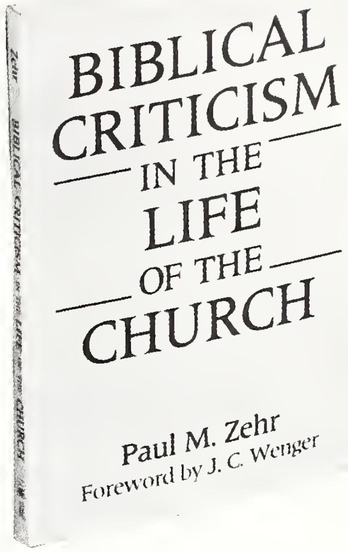
No one faces cancer alone.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Is there any value to biblical criticism?

What are the benefits? What are the dangers?

How does one integrate the findings of higher criticism with one's faith?


BIBLICAL CRITICISM IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH
Paul M. Zehr
Foreword by J. C. Wenger
Zehr
BIBLICAL CRITICISM IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Biblical Criticism in the Life of the Church
by Paul M. Zehr

Biblical Criticism in the Life of the Church brings the scholar and layperson closer together while developing a deeper commitment to Christ and the Holy Scriptures.

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"This book will enhance the unity of the believing community. Young scholars will realize that the church does perceive the necessity of doing biblical criticism. Older members will see that the younger people are not necessarily adopting unbiblical canons of thought by presupposing untrue assumptions. Together we move forward as we hold firmly to Christian truth."—from the foreword by J. C. Wenger

Biblical Criticism in the Life of the Church is designed to introduce biblical criticism within the context of the Christian faith to first-time students, whether high school, college or seminary, pastors, and interested laypersons. It shows both the strengths and weaknesses of biblical criticism.
Paper $6.95, in Canada $9.75

Back in Print

Biblical Revelation and Inspiration
by H. S. Bender

In this faith-building pamphlet Bender clarifies some of the questions raised about God's revelation to man and the inspiration of the Bible.

The fact that this careful statement, originally published in 1959, speaks clearly and perceptively, even in the context of today's battle over the Bible, attests to its worth and status as a classic. In attempting to delineate a theory of revelation and inspiration that is faithful to the biblical text, Bender ably avoids the extremes of both liberals and conservatives.
Paper $1.45, in Canada $2.05

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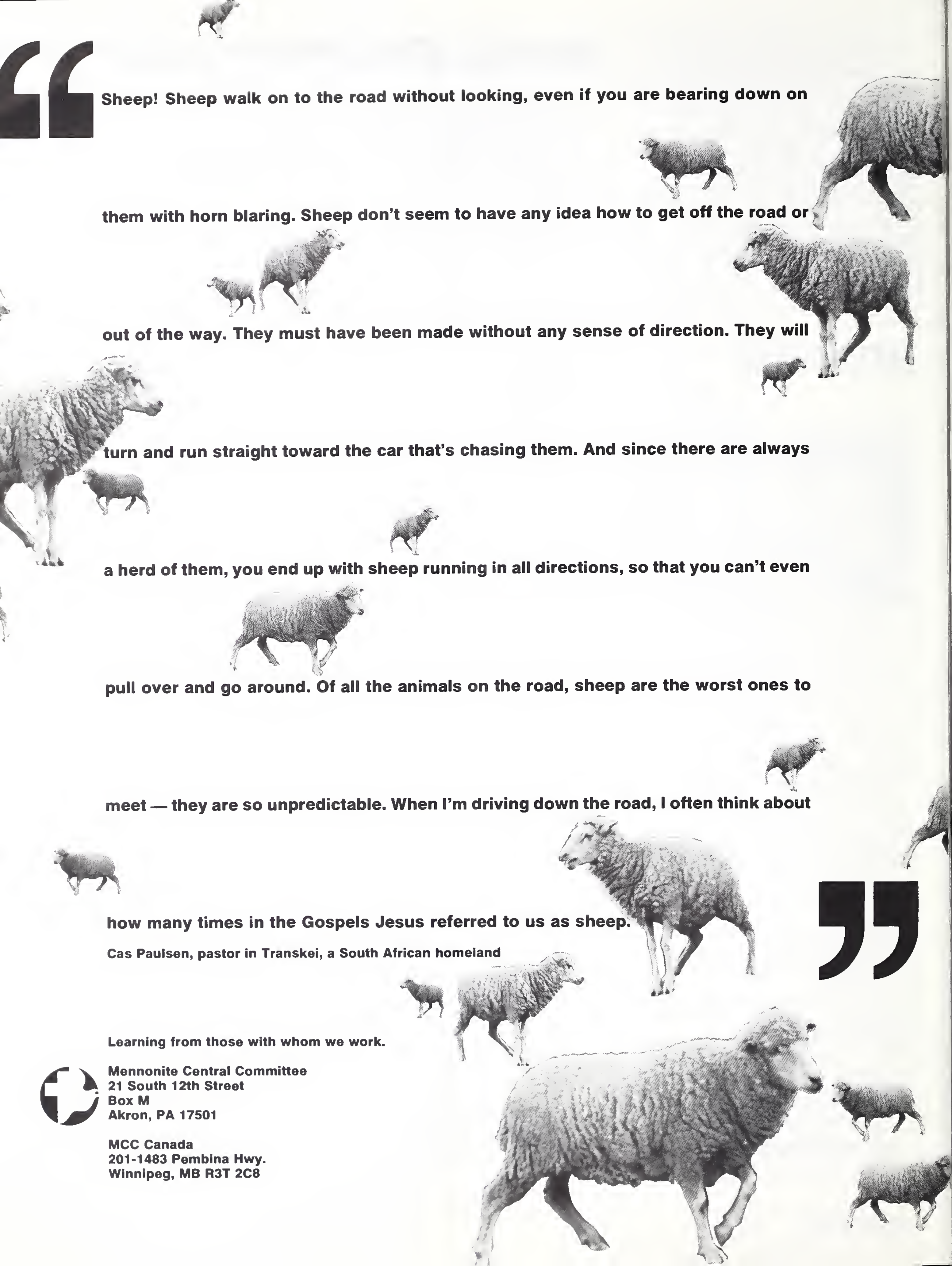

“Sheep! Sheep walk on to the road without looking, even if you are bearing down on them with horn blaring. Sheep don't seem to have any idea how to get off the road or out of the way. They must have been made without any sense of direction. They will turn and run straight toward the car that's chasing them. And since there are always a herd of them, you end up with sheep running in all directions, so that you can't even pull over and go around. Of all the animals on the road, sheep are the worst ones to meet — they are so unpredictable. When I'm driving down the road, I often think about how many times in the Gospels Jesus referred to us as sheep.”

Cas Paulsen, pastor in Transkei, a South African homeland

Learning from those with whom we work.

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street
Box M
Akron, PA 17501

MCC Canada
201-1483 Pembina Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8

LETTERS

Finally a straight furrow?

For some years now I have been waiting for our conferences to take a clear stand on the homosexual problem. Are we ready to accept the Scriptures as our guidelines in this area?

I was glad to read Terrence Paige's letter, "Sexuality Like Ice Cream" (Jan. 28 issue, p. 43). He has finally drawn a straight furrow through the New Testament and has shown us what the Scriptures have to say on this issue. I know he will be criticized because we have a number of people that will not agree. Sometimes I wonder why we question God or do not agree with our Lord or criticize what the Holy Spirit has to say through the apostles. To some, homosexuality is not a sin but an abnormal expression of love and therefore cannot be condemned and must be condoned. It would help us if more articles of this nature would be printed in this paper and the editorials could spearhead a biblical clarification of this problem. Yes, we do need to love the sinner, but that does not mean that we have to condone sin. How much longer will we need to study this problem to come to a clear biblical conclusion? *P. J. Froese, 3275 Cheam Drive, Route 8, Abbotsford, BC V2S 6A9*

March 3

Leadership and Mennonites

Bernie Loeppky in "Mixed Models of Church and Leadership" (Feb. 11 issue) states that when there is a problem of leadership in a church, the real issues are not dealt with and someone is stuck with the blame. But Loeppky doesn't deal with the real issues in suggesting solutions either. He resorts instead to the common Mennonite practice of blaming other Christian groups for setting up bad models that we have emulated. The implied message is that if we do it our way we'll get it right.

Few churches have such a history of discord and abuse of leadership powers as does the Mennonite church in Russia and even the early days in North America. There was a time when many Mennonite bishops ruled with an iron fist. The reaction to this has been a democratic church in a democratic country.

The issue is not theology or modeling. It is human relationships. The biblical models of leadership are not nearly as broad as our notion of shared ministry is. A great deal of what we think is Scripture is merely Anabaptist theology devised by the all-too-human interpretation of our own people (40 variations in 500 years at last count?).

The real problem in the modern church is that we are all too steeped in secular democracy, which promotes the individual rather than humility and deference to others.

The article also says that few pastoral families are producing candidates for the ministry. This can be traced in part to the changing values of the church in current society. Sacrifice is no longer attractive in a society where few are willing to make it.

Our Anabaptist models have never worked in practice as well as they have on paper. It's time to cut out the press release approach in understanding ourselves. We need Christ, the Scripture, each other and humility in our daily lifestyle in and out of church. Whatever model we then use will work. *Wally Goossen, 16 Helen St., Apt. 106, Dundas, ON L9H 1N4*

March 3

Editor's note: This is a much-condensed version of Wally's response. A full copy is available.

'High touch' buzzword?

I noticed you used the term "high touch" in your editorial (Feb. 25 issue). Is that when you reach up and pat someone on the head who is taller than you? Would "low touch" be the reverse? Perhaps high touch is an esoteric usage unknown to those uninitiated into some mystical order? I suspect it is some sort of buzzword people flaunt to intimidate others and feign communication among themselves. In any event, there may be more effective ways to communicate. *John Burton, Box 1652, Wheatridge, CO 80034*

March 11

Editor's note: Good reminder.

Irked by mockery

I am irked when I hear speakers say, "God bless you, every one," at the conclusion of a speech that has just (at least in my way of thinking) made a mockery of God's truth and blessing. This, to me, is tantamount to taking God's name in vain. I experienced this recently during one of President Reagan's nationally televised speeches. He trumpeted the call of "peace, peace" via military strength (in which there is no real peace), then closed with the words "God bless you, every one," or something to that effect.

These are the attitudes that the Lord blesses (cf. Matthew 5:3-10): Blessed are we who seek to . . . walk humbly with our God—*receive* the Holy Spirit . . . admit our wrongheadedness and quit justifying ourselves and our lifestyles—*grieve* over our self-centeredness and sin . . . yield in trust to God's way—*believe* in Jesus . . . know, obey and be like Jesus only, the Righteous One—*cleave* to Jesus . . . bestow lavish grace on others—offer a *reprieve* in the name of Christ . . . have a single-minded devotion to God—*leave* other idolatrous loyalties . . . be ambassadors of reconciliation—*retrieve* the lost, the outcast, the stranger, the enemy . . . be willing to suffer, sacrifice, lay down our lives (instead of taking another's life) for the sake of "rightness"—*heave* our "cross" on our shoulders and follow Jesus. *Doug Reichenbach, Box 67, Wayland, IA 52654*

March 14

Promote *The Mennonite*

I affirm *The Mennonite* and our need in Canada for this paper for a number of reasons: (1) The younger people and people coming into our church from the "outside" (non-ethnic Mennonites) prefer *The Mennonite.* They appreciate the type of articles, spiritual input and teaching they find in it. They were happy to choose the paper under the Every Home Plan.

2. *The Mennonite* is a link that ties all of us together in the General Conference also beyond Canada.

Therefore, I urge the General Conference to promote *The Mennonite* throughout Canada and the United States. I would like to see it undergirded in some kind of plan in cooperation with the local churches.

I am a past newspaper subscription representative for Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury, Alta. Our present representative, Nettie Hildebrandt, also endorses this concern. *Erna Goerzen, Route 1, Carstairs, AB T0M 0N0*

March 18

Editor's note: Thanks for the affirmation. How do other Canadian readers feel about this?

Challenges to Abou's Jesus

Loren Entz

Abou Traorè was not a traditional sorcerer, the kind who regulates daily events in a small, traditional village. Rather he worked hand in hand with the Muslim leaders in larger towns of Burkina Faso. As a Muslim, Abou knew the secrets involved in sorcery. He possessed names of five evil spirits, each written in Arabic on special individual papers. He had given the equivalent of hundreds of dollars to obtain these names. They were the source of his special power. He was a Muslim sorcerer.

Whenever the Muslim leader was approached by someone willing to pay for help in getting revenge or perhaps desiring a certain woman or wanting to make money, Abou was called to help "make it happen." Abou did whatever necessary to manipulate the evil spirits to do their work. Afterwards Abou and his Muslim colleague would split the profit. Both managed comfortable lifestyles in the Orodara area.

But one day Abou took those valuable papers, tore them to pieces, dug a hole with a hoe and buried all those fragments. Only three days before he had felt God calling him to follow "the Jesus road." He had listened to a cassette tape giving the testimony of an ex-Muslim leader who had experienced salvation in Jesus Christ. Abou found that the message "broke his heart" as well. He knew he had to give himself to Jesus. For five days he agonized. He felt he was being chased until he gave up and found peace with Jesus.

For a month Abou suffered from what he called a cleansing experience, one of repentance. Doctors would have called it hepatitis, but Abou saw it as a time of getting rid of all the evil he had done. All along Abou had known what was right and what was wrong. He had consciously been doing the wrong and now believed God brought this illness for a purpose. During the month of cleansing, missionaries from the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in Orodara came to sit and pray and read the Bible with him.

Abou, center, is being baptized by two lay brothers from the Burkina Faso church.

It soon became obvious that Abou wanted to share his faith with others. So the missionaries spent many hours teaching him, using audiovisual materials or simply reading long portions of the Bible to him, all of which he loved and remembered. He began showing the pictures to others, playing the cassette tapes of messages and testimonies, and telling the Bible stories to his Muslim friends in town. He also experienced visions which told him how and where to share his testimony. He became an excellent evangelist, telling the gospel story with pictures and informally answering questions out of his experience. The radical change in his life was the most powerful witness. He was full of joy and people saw it.

Soon villages beyond Orodara heard of a changed Abou and asked him to come. He was invited to his own people, the Samogho people.

One night elders who were fetishers invited Abou in order to test him. Was the power of his Jesus greater than their fetish occult power? First they tried to poison him with food, but Abou found victory over that as he offered a prayer of thanks before he partook of the food. God showed himself to be Abou's right hand and he suffered no ill effects.

Then the elders took him to their sacred grounds late that night. Abou was placed beside a huge gaping hole. The six elders sat on the other side of the hole. Fire escaped from the hole. A special whistling brought poisonous bees from the pit to do their evil work against Abou but again with no success. Abou could not be stopped.

They had one test left—a test which no one else had ever escaped. The old men whistled a second time and a huge snake about 18 inches in diameter emerged. It came toward Abou. It tried to push him into the pit as countless others before him had been pushed in and disappeared. But the snake could only brush his leg. The snake itself fell into the pit. There was no doubt whose power was greater—God's power working through Abou or that of the fetishes through the village elders. The rest of the night Abou preached of Jesus to them until daybreak, when he returned to Orodara.

Later that day Abou received a letter from a powerful sorceress in the same village telling him one of the elders had died and the other five were sick. She asked Abou to come and preach to a group of sorceresses. Actually she wanted to see if Abou's power was greater than theirs. The women claim their sorcery powers to be greater than the fetish power of the men. They naturally thought Jesus' power should be tested with the strongest force known to them—sorcery.

Abou shared this letter from the sorceress with his missionary friends in Orodara. Though the missionaries were apprehensive, Abou was willing to face another night of confrontation. All three prayed together fervently to commission Abou to go and represent Jesus in the midst of great evil.

Fatimata, the chief sorceress, met Abou when he arrived. The whole group of 46 sorceresses accompanied him to their sacred place by the stream where they too tried to kill Abou. Again Abou was the victor in Jesus' power, and again the rest of the night was filled with preaching. Abou

Abou enjoys the two Entz children—Zachary and Mariam.

shared his testimony, told Bible stories and showed pictures telling the gospel story. God's Word reached the most powerful people of the village that night.

One week later Fatimata became ill and was rushed to the hospital in the city. Through her sickness and the willing help of a total stranger she realized that God was calling her. God wanted her to live. He had work for her, the most influential person in the village, to do. She gave herself to Christ and began reading the Bible.

Meanwhile, in a neighboring Samogho village, a woman named Makoura heard what had happened. She heard that Abou's power from Jesus was greater than that of the sorceress. So she also invited Abou, supposedly to preach, but in reality to destroy him. Her power was not simply sorcery power. Her source of power was that of a special evil spirit which had enabled her to kill hundreds of people through the years.

Abou did not know Makoura was the most powerful person in the region, nor was he afraid to go meet her. So again Abou was sent to represent Jesus to Makoura. The AIMM missionaries prayed for him and sent him on his way.

This trip was made on a borrowed bicycle. Abou carried a tape player, cassette tapes, Bible pictures and a change of clothes. Suddenly, with an explosive noise, the bicycle burst into flames. Abou miraculously escaped unharmed with the Christian teaching materials, but everything else burned. Even sand wouldn't put out the fire immediately. So Abou continued on foot to his destination.

Upon his arrival Makoura exclaimed, "What are you doing here? You are supposed to be dead."

Abou answered, "You invited me, and I've come with the power of Jesus." Abou was invited to share this source of power with Makoura. He spent the night in the house of the evil spirit, which was no longer able to live there. It had not been victorious in the power encounter with Abou's Jesus.

Several days later Makoura got news that her evil spirit, which normally took on the form of a snake, had been sighted dead in the bush. On Makoura's arrival the snake's corpse accused her of giving it an assignment that was too difficult to do. Makoura lost control of herself. She was going mad and started confessing all the evil she had done—which was considerable.

Abou shares in a time of fellowship with a retired nurse (and unidentified child) and AIMM missionary Donna Entz.

Her family quickly made arrangements for her to be removed, fearing she would reveal too many secrets. At great expense they sent her to a distant village far to the north, where her oldest son lived.

Thirty years earlier Makoura was instructed to sacrifice her firstborn son in order to gain the power of the evil spirit. When the boy learned of this evil plan, he ran away to Bobo Dioulasso and later went to school at Tougan. In the meantime his mother completed the occult compact by sacrificing her co-spouse's child to receive the power.

Makoura's son had become a Christian in the intervening years of being separated from his mother. Now he was the pastor of a Christian church. Here she was in his village, where she regained her senses. Together with several others from her home village, Makoura made a commitment to Christ. Extensive teaching followed in the Samagho mother tongue as son taught mother and the other relatives who had come.

When Abou became a Christian, he thought he was the only Christian from his ethnic group—the Samogho. He gave himself to learning and study as well as sharing his faith. God chose to confront the spiritual powers and spiritual authority structures in the villages, working through Abou. Little did Makoura's son know that he too, though isolated as the first Samogho Christian, was being prepared through these many years to share the Christian faith with his mother and eventually with the rest of the Samogho people.

Abou continues to need the prayer support of other Christians. He faces great pressures from those engaged in the occult activities. For the people abandoning sorcery to "follow the Jesus road" it means the loss of their livelihood, since the practice of sorcery can also be quite lucrative and prestigious. With limited resources and shortage of missionary personnel with adequate time for discipling, the adequate training and grounding in the faith for people like Abou is difficult.

How tragic it would be for the church in Burkina Faso if the power of Christ, already demonstrated in the life of Abou, were to be diminished, not by the spirits but because Christians were too busy to pray and to make Christian nurture available.

Loren Entz, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, is an AIMM missionary currently on North America Assignment.

Wholistic prayer

Earth & Altar: The Community of Prayer in a Self-Bound Society *by Eugene H. Peterson (Paulist Press, 1985, 180 pages)*

Reviewed by Richard K. Early, 28 Franklin Ave., Souderton, PA 18964

One gets a strong sense immediately in reading *Earth & Altar* that the exercise of prayer by Christians, particularly those located in North America, will remedy the multitude of social, economic and spiritual problems we face.

Selecting 11 Psalms that molded the community of Israel, Peterson begins with Psalm 2. Here he issues a plea for prayer as a common ground where "social and spiritual activists" can meet. Doing a convincing job at demonstrating the difference between private and corporate prayer, he contends that prayer unites and stops those forces that seem bent on destruction.

In each chapter Peterson stresses that self must submit to the authority and sovereignty of God. He is not only capable of executing judgment on individuals but on nations as well. Prayer enables both the individual self and the corporate self (government, community) to recognize as well as understand their need for and dependence on the Lord.

Peterson writes, "God has made it clear that he is not content to rescue a few souls from damnation. Redemption has been conceived on a scale far exceeding our capacity to comprehend it—a new heaven and a new earth are involved. People who pray find themselves involved both with the king who is establishing his rule in the cosmos and the priest who is setting persons right before God."

What makes *Earth & Altar* worthwhile reading is the masterful way the author presents the practice of prayer in the community of believers as a strategy to bring change in all areas of life. Few books offer its readers as wholistic a view of prayer as this one.

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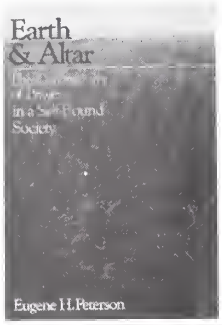
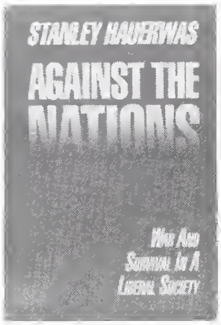




Central American journal

Steadfastness of the Saints *by Daniel Berrigan (Orbis, 1985, 133 pages)*

Reviewed by Richard McSorley, Center for Peace Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057

This is Daniel Berrigan's journal of peace and war in Central America during a three-week visit. At the end he writes, "I would be a fonder fool than report allows, were I to think that easy answers were at hand to the questions these weeks have raised."

Primary among the questions is what a believer in gospel non-violence would say about military resistance to the contras. He does not answer the question directly, but alludes to it when he comments on the unity of the Jesuits in Nicaragua. He notes how precarious the subject matter of "love your enemies" becomes.

He tells of the places he lived and the people he met. He connects the experiences to his past and to his future hopes and fears.

Berrigan contrasts the Nicaraguan bishops' distance from the poor with the Salvadoran bishops' closeness to them. He points out the dichotomy between U.S. support of the murderous Salvadoran government and U.S. opposition to the government of Nicaragua, which has the support of the peasants.

Berrigan relates everything he sees and hears to his own experiences and to that of his friends jailed in the United States for opposing the Vietnam War and the nuclear buildup. He never loses sight of the relationship between the "megadeath" policies adhered to by the U.S. government and the mutilated corpses left on the plains in Central America.

He chronicles his day-to-day experiences of his journey from the United States (the Land of Unknowing) through El Salvador and Nicaragua, where he witnessed the effects of death squads and contra attacks. As he looks and listens to the steadfastness of the saints, the poor, the victims, he admires their faith, their courage, their inextinguishable hope, their refusal to disappear and to be silent.

Christian pacifism

Against the Nations *by Stanley Hauerwas (Winston Press, 1985, 208 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, assistant editor

Subtitled *War and Survival in a Liberal Society*, this book of essays seems designed for scholars—ethicists and theologians—yet it has much to say to the general reader.

Hauerwas is a Protestant who has taught at a Catholic school and is deeply influenced by Mennonite John Howard Yoder. Throughout his recent books (He's a prolific fellow) he has argued for a Christian ethic that sees the church as the locus for "God's story." He is perhaps, besides Yoder, the most articulate spokesman for Christian pacifism. At the root of this pacifist belief is "the recognition that it is not our task to make history come out right . . . history has already come out right and just because it has we can take the time in a world threatened by its own pretensions of control to seek patiently a truthful peace."

Against the Nations expands his viewpoint to a number of areas. He moves from general themes of "Keeping Theological Ethics Theological" and "Keeping Theological Ethics Imaginative" to applying these themes to the Holocaust, Jonestown, the reality of the kingdom, the reality of the church, the democratic state, disarmament and nuclear war.

Hauerwas is nothing if not thought provoking. He is unafraid to tackle difficult issues, and he does so in a thorough fashion. Unfortunately his writing can become difficult to follow.

At a time when some Mennonite thinkers seem to be sliding from a solidly pacifist commitment, it is ironic yet good to find a non-Mennonite speak so eloquently and forthrightly for a Christian pacifist ethic.

MEDITATION

Growth in the body

Congregations are strengthened when children are nurtured, youth are encouraged, adults are equal and intergenerational interaction is reinforced.

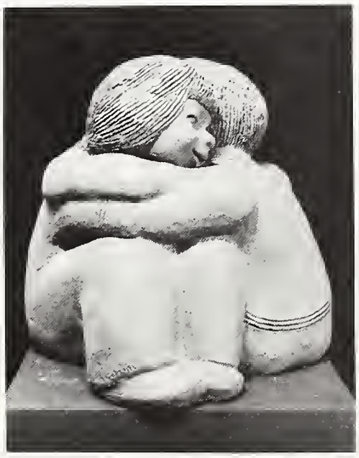
Children in the congregation are nurtured when:
N oticed with a smile and known by name
U understood, grateful for explanations and consideration
R egarded as welcome and included in worship
T hought of as members of the church family
U seful, finding Scripture passages, giving the offering, locating hymn pages, singing in children's choir
R esponding to God
E ncouraged to sit with extended family and adult friends for part of the worship service
D edicated to God.

Youth in the congregation are encouraged when:
E ach is known by name
N on-competitive activities foster group effort
C amping and conference programs are promoted by adults
O pportunity is backed with support
U nderstanding is practiced
R easons are given
A dults energetically give of their time
G roup activities are intergenerational
E xperiences of service are provided
D eeds of God's love and action are shared by the adults.

Adults in the congregations are equal when:
E ach is recognized for one's gift and given opportunity to serve
Q uestioning is accepted from both male and female, single or married, in search of a better way
U nderstanding that in Christ there is neither male nor female, that ascribed roles and tasks may be cultural
A ll are known by their given name
L earning and studying together instead of in segregated groups.

Intergenerational interaction in the congregation is reinforced when:
R eviewing together the past and looking ahead to the future
E nergy is spent: MCC canner, MCC sale, visiting, helping
I nfluencing and being influenced
N eeds of all age groups are discussed and acted upon
F riends are of all ages
O pen communication exists
R egardless of age there is giving and receiving
C ommunity of faith is discerning
E vents are attended by all
D ividing the work to be done.

Lois Thieszen Preheim



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To be born again into the Easter family is life's most beautiful new beginning. But it is a beginning and therefore requires nurture.

Evangelism without follow-up education can become spiritual abuse. It is a serious tragedy in many churches.

The General Conference Mennonite Church has three program commissions. Our Commission on Education is charged with the significant challenge of providing nurture resources in our congregations. It is a vital mission. This issue is dedicated to promoting our vision for COE ministries.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

The echo of loneliness

We are Easter people, people of the resurrection. We love celebration, especially of people experiencing new life. We have an inner drive and desire to be with people. We understand Peter, on the Mount of Transfiguration, wanting to build booths (Matthew 17:1-8). He experienced the presence, the fellowship of Jesus, Moses and Elijah. To him this seemed like heaven on earth and he wanted it permanent.

But the Easter parade is over. The crowds have dispersed. And in the stillness many feel the echoing chorus, "Alone, alone . . . he bore it all alone . . . he suffered, bled and died . . . alone."

Loneliness is a stillness that wants to scream. It is an emptiness that threatens to explode. To be alone is to feel utterly forsaken—even by God (Matthew 27:46). Your insides rebel in anger and frustration. There are 4.7 billion people in the world. Why do I feel as if I'm the only inhabitant on this planet?

It is among young people too. One student said, "They are them and belong together. Most people have a *we* to belong to. I am alone." That feels like an "it."

The patient in the large hospital says, "I see a blur of movement all day—doctors, nurses, visitors, machines. But I feel nothing, see nobody and hear only noise. I'm tired and I long for release from my lonely cage."

A newcomer to the city visits our church a number of times. One day we meet on the street. He says, "I've been slipping into the worship services. I've stood around during the breaks. Yes, some have pressed my hand, engaged my tongue and inquired of my cultural geography. But I have not yet *met* one person in your church. I've been a lonely stranger."

The couple told of their dilemma. An aged grandparent vegetating in a comatose state. She had been so beautiful, so precious. Long ago she had told them that when her time came, "please let me die in peace and dignity." Now they had many consultations with the medical staff. Finally, in the solitude of their prayers, they found peace to let go. No more heroic measures to sustain a decaying corpse. With tears in their eyes they confessed, "But we couldn't tell anybody in our church." In the body of Christ—and desperately lonely.

Loneliness remains the number one dis-ease—even in our churches. It is tragic. When we make a decision to follow Christ and become part of his body, that should be the last act you and I ever have to do alone. From that point on, we are part of the body of Christ. We are members one of another. Our lives are covered by Jesus' life-giving love for all people. That love continues to all and in all. He will not leave or forsake us—ever.

We desperately need the nurture programs of the Commission on Education. In Marriage Encounter weekends many couples have discovered ways to bridge their loneliness. Through the Faith and Life Bible studies new and dynamic connections have been found. COE helps us find courage to break the chains of our isolation. It also challenges us to remove our insulation against other people.

The runaway girl wept profusely. She needed her family. But she could still hear the frustrated scream of her father, "Don't ever come back." We talked of our being, our incompleteness without God and without other people. We agreed this is a universal dilemma. I assured her that parents are no exception—in spite of stupid statements we make when angry. She confessed her own statements had also often been tough.

She accepted the offer to use my office telephone. I left for a few minutes. I could feel the reluctant yet eager fingers touching the digits on the dial. The buzz of the connection. A pulse wanting to jump out of her body. Awkward words of greeting. And. . . .

There was no shout of joy. Finally I opened the door. She sat totally immersed in her loneliness—eyes too wept out for any signs of wetness. "Dad says I can't come; he doesn't believe I mean it." Then she clung desperately to my shoulder, an unspoken begging not to give up on her. My tears flooded out.

"It's not an easy road we travel together," says the popular song. The Easter road is a victory road. But the echoes of loneliness remain. We must help one another to keep walking, talking, searching, risking, forgiving, loving. (P.S. I wouldn't share the above story if it had not come out OK in the end. She is today restored to her family. But the journey was slow and rough.) *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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Resolving marriage conflict

J. Andrew Stoner

David and Vera Mace, world-renowned leaders in Marriage Enrichment, suggest that in order for a marriage to grow more meaningful and fulfilling, a couple needs to develop a method for resolving conflict. Conflicts, left unresolved, will result in distance, alienation, deep emotional injury and decreasing intimacy. Conversely, when a couple develops patterns for resolving conflicts, they will inevitably be opening their relationship to increased intimacy and closeness. What about conflicts in marriage? How can they be used to a positive advantage in building a marriage?

Conflicts will be what you either allow them to be or make them to be. It is best to choose to see them as opportunities, thus making them stepping-stones toward intimacy and understanding. They can be seen as opportunities to learn something new about your spouse, about yourself, about your environment and about your marriage relationship. To be willing to mutually work at resolving conflicts is an expression of love in itself and demonstrates a strong commitment to the other.

Often surface conflicts represent deeper dimensions of concern than the specific area of the conflict suggests. For example, a conflict over whose responsibility it is to keep the checkbook balanced may be a struggle for power or control. Sometimes present conflicts may have their roots in differing role models observed as children growing up, and the people just presupposed that was the way all marriages were to be. Thus, with differing models in mind, a conflict was unavoidable. Or a conflict can be a means of shielding one from a point of vulnerability or intimacy. When one senses the other getting too close or becoming more truthful than one wants to become, it is easy to find an issue over which to conflict to insure that distance is maintained and intimacy avoided. Be careful to look beneath the surface to identify underlying issues of serious proportions, instead of focusing only on conflicts themselves.

Conflicts are always bilateral in nature. Actions are unilateral, and many times a change by one person may divert a conflict. But by definition a conflict involves at least two differing opinions. Therefore, in resolving a conflict a couple must see it as "their" problem, not just that of one or the

In resolving conflicts, couples must see them as their problems, not just his or hers.

other. If seen as a mutual problem, the solution will also have a mutuality. Of course, this implies a presupposition that both are willing to work at resolving the conflict and both are committed to the marriage relationship. To see conflicts from a standpoint of mutuality also enables each person to have a share in the credit for resolving it, thus building unity between them.

It is helpful to remember that the process a couple goes through in resolving conflicts is just as important as the end result. If the focus is on the result, there is too much possibility for seeing it from a winner-or-loser perspective. (I win this time, you win next.) If we reduce our conflict resolutions to a win-lose scorecard, we aren't really resolving any conflicts. It is a disguised attempt at control and domination. Rather both husband and wife must be more concerned about what happens to both of them and their marriage relationship in the process of resolving a conflict. In other words, attempt to see the forest—the total picture—and not just the trees or individual conflicts.

Furthermore, it is not enough to spiritualize conflicts. There is a temptation to think that praying about differences will cause them to disappear or that you'll be able to find a specific biblical answer to each conflict, thus always finding a perfectly acceptable solution. It just doesn't work that way. For instance, if trying to decide which family a couple will visit at Christmas, his or hers, one will be hard pressed to find a biblical solution. In many conflicts it seems our Creator says we are to use our common sense and our reasoning abilities to reach a mutually acceptable solution. The most important thing to remember is that both be concerned about displaying a Christlike attitude in the process of resolution. This is where our Christian faith can make an enormous difference in our marriage.

There are some not-so-healthy responses to conflict which are regularly used. One is to attempt to avoid it, to run away from it. This works for a while, but is not a solution. Another is to deny that there is any conflict. The belief is that if one proclaims it loud and long enough, you'll convince yourself and others that conflicts are no problem. Another common one is to suppress it or just keep silent in hopes it will all go away. Sometimes it does. But that is not a resolution and it bypasses the possibilities for intimacy. But the response which bothers me most, especially in Christian circles, is the martyr complex, or the "peace-at-all-costs" philosophy, which requires one person to be the doormat, to acquiesce and go along with what the other wants in order to minimize conflicts. This often carries a biblical injunction for submission, usually by the wife. The Bible speaks of submission, but it is a mutual, willing, loving submission built into the process of conflict resolution in which there is no concern for power, domination or control over the other person and in which each person esteems the other as highly as they wish to be valued.

How then can a conflict be resolved? Here are five steps to follow: **(1) Diffuse it.** Look at it in such a way that both can win—without losing either dignity or identity. Maybe all one needs is time—10 minutes, two hours, a day—to pull back from the highly charged emotional edge of the conflict so as to be able to talk about it realistically, honestly and objectively. Seek the most profitable time and manner in which to resolve the conflict.

2. Define it. Clearly indicate what the conflict is all about—no more and no less. Be honest in seeking agreement about what the conflict is. Often, if that much agreement is reached, the conflict isn't nearly as crucial or important. By all means don't drag in other peripheral issues which cloud the discussion or antagonize.

3. Discuss it. Discuss all sides as dispassionately as possible. Seek, above all, to understand the other's point of view, regard the other's feelings and try to find a mutually agreeable compromise. Often the point of a conflict is the desire to be heard and understood. Once that need is met, the conflict pales in importance.

4. Decide it. If the first three steps have been followed, rarely is this step impossible. By this time, both people are aware of what should be done, especially if there has been a mutual desire for the Spirit of God to direct the process. Prayer should have been an integral part of each step. If there still seems to be no clear direction, ask two further questions: First, does there need to be an immediate answer? Maybe the best solution is *no* answer at the present. Let time and providence help decide the issue. Secondly, if an immediate decision is required, to whom can you go for objective advice? Often a mutually trusted person or group can be of incalculable value in getting you through the process. Be certain there is mutual agreement about what the decision ultimately is. It is possible to come this far, but with differing perceptions on what was finally agreed upon, only to have it all erupt later in a larger conflict.

5. Drop it. After a conflict is resolved, both should incorporate the learnings into their lives. Celebrate the occasion with a deepening of openness and intimacy between yourselves. Express appreciation for the process you've just experienced. Drop the matter.

If it is brought up again, it hasn't been resolved. This is where forgiveness comes into focus. Forgiveness is the willingness to drop the issue, to no longer seek redress or revenge nor to continue the conflict in such a way as to hurt the other person no matter how often the opportunity arises.

Diffuse, define, discuss, decide, then drop it. Five steps in resolving conflicts to increase intimacy and strengthen the marriage relationship. Conflict poses the opportunity to improve or to destroy intimacy in a marriage. The choice is yours. •

Forgiveness means to drop the issue and not bring it up again, no matter how often you have opportunity to do so.

Elfrieda Neufeld

Head injury is a family affair

On Nov. 2, 1985, Jeremy Rempel, 14, was presented with an award by the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., for his efforts in track and field competition for physically disabled athletes. The son of Ray and Elsie Rempel, Jeremy has moved out of the unsure world of enormous physical and mental impairment to overcome major injuries and handicaps. This has resulted in breaking records for almost every athletic event he has entered in the past year.

On Aug. 27, 1980, just two days after his ninth birthday, Jeremy was riding his bike with two friends while waiting for the rest of his birthday party guests to arrive. He was struck down by a pickup truck—rendering him unconscious. The impact of the blow jarred his brain, causing it to swell. After the removal of a massive blood clot, the swelling continued. It forced the removal of a section of bone measuring 4.3 inches x 5.5 inches from just above his eyes to the middle of his skull. Jeremy's condition improved in spite of having to battle with internal bleeding, a collapsed lung and meningitis. He showed the first signs of consciousness late in September. The 9-year-old youngster was paralyzed and unable to speak. He was diagnosed as having suffered massive permanent impairment. Jeremy's parents and sisters Sheri and Kim agonized as the once bright and enthusiastic sports participant struggled to live while doctors endeavored to put his body together again.

Jeremy Rempel displays his "I'm gonna win" spirit as he wheels along.

So many friends, relatives and neighbors phoned to offer help that it prompted Sylvia Wiens, a close friend, to organize a bedside brigade. Approximately 30 individuals were given a scheduled visiting time to drive to the hospital in Hamilton six days a week. Jeremy was touched, talked to and given affection and stimulation needed to aid him in learning to talk and move again. They would read stories, tell jokes, sing songs and ask questions in an effort to get Jeremy to show some response. Vivian Wiens, his Sunday school teacher, read the lessons and stories she taught the rest of her students. The volunteer brigade, including at times whole families, would bring tapes of hockey games, hockey cards and a variety of foods to jolt his taste buds. With instructions from hospital staff they would rub his body with lotion and work his limbs and encourage him to move on his own. The brigade kept up the hospital visits for three months until Jeremy was able to go home.

The visitors documented each step, however slight, of Jeremy's progress in a notebook. Sept. 24 reads: "I brought him the hockey magazine. Read a little, asked some questions. He slightly shook his head, *but* when I told him the Maple Leafs had beaten the Montreal Canadiens, he burst out in a big smile."

Oct. 1: "He *really* squeezed our hands today, scratched his knee and smiled. . . ."

Oct. 4: Sister Sheri wrote, "Jer cried a little tonight. When I asked him if he was scared and confused, he squeezed my hands very tightly. I sort of held him up to me. Seemed to calm him down especially when I told him I was staying the night and wouldn't leave him."

Oct. 13: "Jeremy said 'milk' and 'let go' when Cornie held his cup."

The daily entries in this diary kept beside Jeremy's bed record the pilgrimage of a boy—with half his skull removed and part of his brain damaged—from darkness into light. It is the story of a family of God's children

The Rempel family celebrated with Jeremy on Nov. 2, 1985, when he received the Niagara-on-the-Lake award. Left to right: Vic and Sheri Durksen, Elsie, Ray, Jeremy and Kim Rempel

united in working together—showing compassion and love.

Friends looking back remember a small-looking 9-year-old with a bandaged head in a big hospital bed. Numerous tubes and machines were breathing for him, sustaining him and monitoring his very being. They remember the awareness of Ray and Elsie's strength as they placed their son in God's hands. They marvel at the courage and dedication of Sheri, and Kim's acceptance of God's promise in what seemed like a hopeless situation.

Jeremy was able to return to his home in Niagara-on-the-Lake, but his recovery was far from complete. Head-injured people have a difficult road to travel. Aid to such individuals must go beyond a medical scope—concerned families and friends are needed in their ongoing recovery. Ray says, “Increased medical sophistication has contributed to the problem. In the past, a large majority would have died. Today they are kept alive, and society stacks them aside in chronic-care homes. Our concern is that they can go on living.” The physical and mental injuries causing brain damage are overwhelming, but the loss of self is almost unfathomable. The feelings of uselessness and unworthiness can be overcome only with help by family and friends. Jeremy's mother says he frequently asks, “Do you still love me?”

The areas of the brain not damaged continue to operate as they did prior to the accident. The damaged areas either no longer function or do so in a dysfunctional manner. This creates an ongoing rediscovery crisis in the life of the head-injured person. Some of the probable frustration for Jeremy seemed evident in the Oct. 19 entry in his hospital diary: “. . . the nurse took Jer's blood pressure. He said it hurt and offered her a ‘knuckle sandwich.’ Then she apologized and he said, ‘Saying sorry doesn't help some mistakes.’ ”

“Our family has always been close,” says Kim, Jeremy's 19-year-old sister. “Now the bond seems stronger through the experiences we've shared with Jer.” Sister Sheri, recently married, says, “The past years sometimes seem like a dream mixed with good and bad feelings.” Both Sheri and her husband, Vic, are keenly aware that while Jeremy's crisis period is in the past, his battle is far from finished.

Ray and Elsie experience an ongoing grief process. “You mourn for the child who once was,” says Elsie. “You go on with life, encouraging and sometimes insisting that family members carry on with personal lives even when it is sometimes easier to devote their whole time to Jeremy.” Ray finds that the hardest part of all to face as a parent “is the realization that your kid will probably never be able to live independently.”

Jeremy lives at home with his family. A home that had to be significantly rebuilt to accommodate his wheelchair and other conveniences in order for him to remain with his family. He attends school at the Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre in St. Catharines, Ont., where he also assists instructors and volunteers in encouraging those students less fortunate. His bright, cheery disposition and keen sense of humor, existing already prior to his accident, have contributed to Jeremy being able to rise from the status of “one who constantly needs” to “one who gives.” He has overcome seemingly unsurmountable handicaps to become a valuable member of the community—resulting in being nominated Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year.

The Rempel family attributes much of Jeremy's development and recovery to his involvement in sports. He recently earned four gold medals in the Ontario Games for the Physically Disabled. While Jeremy's circle of fans is increasing, his biggest and most constant support comes from his immediate family. A head injury is a family affair. Elsie says one of Jeremy's deficiencies is lack of inhibition. He says whatever comes to mind regardless of person or place. This frequently demands a lot of understanding. His short attention span needs constant prompting from his family for him to keep at whatever he is doing.

During a particularly strenuous exercise therapy, Jeremy told his nurse, “I wish I had never been in that truck accident.” In spite of many frustrations and sometimes hopeless times, Jeremy's contagious grin and sparkling blue eyes help the family cope. His “I'm gonna win” spirit is an ever-present sign of hope to the large circle of friends and family who come in contact with Jeremy Rempel.

Note: Ray and Elsie Rempel are active in the local chapter of the Head Injuries Association of Canada. Their aim is to exchange ideas with professionals and families, helping to consolidate thinking and giving resources to those in similar situations. They invite any interested people to write in regard to support groups for head-injured victims, their families and friends or just to share personal experiences. Write to: Ray and Elsie Rempel, Route 2, Townline Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

COMMENTARY

Can we face the AIDS dilemma?

Daniel McCann Duffy

We are sleeping through the AIDS alarm. It's time to wake up.

During 1979 the AIDS virus infected an average of seven people each day. Today the AIDS virus infects more than 1,000 people daily. Of those infected each day, at least 300 will develop AIDS. Ninety percent of the victims are between the ages of 20 and 49. No one diagnosed as having AIDS has lived longer than five years. There is no cure or vaccine.

According to *The Harvard Medical School Health Letter*, "For every person in the United States who has AIDS or one of the related conditions, there are 40 to 50 who are carrying the virus but do not know it." People with the AIDS virus can spread AIDS even though they do not have AIDS themselves.

An estimated 1-2 million Americans are currently infected with the AIDS virus. The National Cancer Institute in Washington has found that one-third of a group in New York City who showed signs of exposure to the virus in 1982 has since developed AIDS. Barring any unforeseen medical breakthrough, at least 300,000 Americans will contract AIDS in the coming five years. This is six times the number of Americans killed in combat during the Vietnam War.

Some symptoms of AIDS are persistent swollen glands, headaches, recurrent fever, night sweats, fatigue, weight loss and a dry cough.

AIDS is not a "gay plague." Available evidence indicates that AIDS is transmitted from person to person through blood, plasma, body organs and tissues, and semen.

"No one diagnosed as having AIDS has lived longer than five years. There is no cure or vaccine."

High-risk group members include homosexuals, bisexuals, intravenous drug users, recipients of blood products and body organs, prostitutes and sexual partners of all these individuals. The last category appears to be AIDS "portal of entry" into the heterosexual world.

The virus is transmitted from an infected male to a female primarily through the semen. The virus has also been documented to be spread from an infected woman to a man. A possible method of transmission is thought to be the woman's blood that can be in a woman's vagina from either her menstrual period or an abrasion.

Infected prostitutes are believed to be rapidly spreading the AIDS virus in the heterosexual population. The Chicago Health Commissioner recently warned the public that "all people who utilize the services of male or female prostitutes are at risk of contracting AIDS."

In Africa, 10 million people are infected with the virus. The primary means of transmission is believed to be heterosexual contact. The ratio of male to female African AIDS victims is about even.

AIDS is not the "wrath of God," as some have suggested by their use of biblical quotes. In the Bible, sickness is not equated with punishment.

In the New Testament parable about Jesus and his disciples meeting a man who was born blind, his disciples asked Jesus, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?"

"Neither he nor his parents sinned," Jesus answered. "He was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him" (John 9:1).

When Mother Teresa opened a New York residence for AIDS patients on Christmas Eve, she said that each AIDS victim "is Jesus in a distressing disguise."

Are not those who sanctimoniously watch and refuse to help people with AIDS actually contributing to the spread of AIDS? Those people should recall these words of Jesus Christ: "Why do you observe the splinter in your brother's eye and not the plank in your own?" (Matthew 7:3).

When people speak of AIDS as the "wrath of God," they should ask themselves what kind of God are they talking about. After all, what kind of God afflicts blameless hemophiliacs and children with AIDS? AIDS leads to a horrible death. Most children with AIDS die from a combination of brain, skin and lung infections.

In the United States the average AIDS patient spends a total of 167 days in a hospital at a cost of $147,000. This cost is usually borne by the state and federal government. Therefore, treatment for the 300,000 future AIDS patients could cost American taxpayers $42 billion in 1990.

In spite of these facts, Congress has allocated only $238 million for AIDS research for the 1986 fiscal year. And the president's 1987 proposed AIDS research budget asks for $195 million, $43 million less than the 1986 allocation.

Many of our nation's leaders are afraid to confront the AIDS challenge for fear their own sexuality and morality might be questioned.

We must courageously ask elected officials to enact a massive AIDS public education campaign. Education is the best vaccination.

By acting with courage in the face of the AIDS challenge, we will protect the lives of millions and the productive and financial resources of our countries. By showing compassion to the AIDS victims of today, we will prevent ourselves from being personal or economic AIDS victims of tomorrow.

Daniel McCann Duffy, Box 1986, Barrington, IL 60011, is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School.

Tossing our stones—John 8:3-11

Earl F. Cater

The air in the temple was filled with dust and sweat. The silence of Jesus seared the intolerance of the Jewish leaders. I can almost hear the hair bristle on their necks, the uneasy shuffle of feet and the gasps of astonishment as Jesus ignored their question.

First, perhaps a whisper from the back of the crowd, "I can't see. What in the Lord's name is he doing?" Then the response of shrugged shoulders. With a jerk of a raised hand another added, "I don't understand. He's not answering the elders. He is squatted there, writing on the ground with his finger." The murmur of voices debating Jesus' most unusual behavior swelled to a crescendo of demands to respond to the charges brought against the woman taken in adultery.

Jesus came to his feet and pointedly spoke simple words, "If any one of you is without sin, be the first to toss a stone at her."

Silence choked the crowd. Jesus returned to his letters in the dust. The silence was broken only by the shuffle of feet and the hard thud of rocks dropped from trembling hands under conviction.

Jesus and the woman were alone. Understanding grace and forgiveness were shared: "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more."

Embarrassment and scorn were judgment enough for the woman taken in adultery. Jesus looked to her future more than her past.

From our narrow human perspective, justice equals punishment. Our answer to the ills of society is judicial. To accept a "fallen" neighbor, we demand wrong corrected.

The response of Jesus is enough to cause the blood of solid citizens to boil. If she were a local schoolteacher we would declare her unfit to teach our children. If she were a minister's wife we would drive the entire family from town. If she were outside the church we would make her a matter of derision—gossip.

If Jesus did this in our town we might be outraged and ask—no, demand—justice. For standards and for a clean Christian community.

Jesus takes into account what the person could become if shown love and forgiveness. For this reason he counsels in Matthew 7:1-2, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

We must not confuse our human need to see punishment executed with divine mission. We must not confuse love and forgiveness with approval. Jesus did not intimate approval of the woman's behavior. He did not leave the door open for the corruption of society. Rather he met human need with divine love. He granted forgiveness, which includes forgetting the error, forgetting the punishment and focusing on future potential. To her his words resound, "Go and sin no more."

Forgiveness in the midst of abounding love is the outstanding characteristic of God that Jesus wants us to see. It is his hope that love and forgiveness would also be the outstanding characteristics in his followers. In Psalm 30:5 David wrote, "His anger is but for a moment, his favor is for a lifetime." John 3:16 teaches us God gave his son that through belief we should not suffer negative justice but receive forgiveness.

I visited an alcoholic woman to settle a domestic dispute. As I entered the squalid environs, the woman lunged at me with the words, "Don't you down me, preacher. Don't you down me." She had been frowned upon and walked around by her Christian neighbors for so long that her immediate fear of my presence was that I too would judge her.

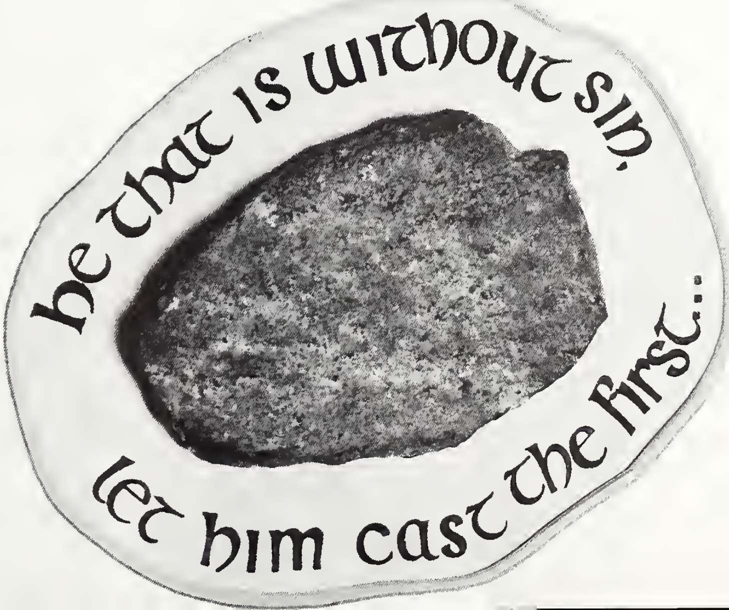
Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:17-19, ". . . that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." This love is not cheap. It does not come in a box with ribbon or bow. This love comes by allowing the nature of Jesus so to fill our hearts that our view of others is filled with his mind and heart.

This love ignores divorce, adultery and even homosexuality. It sees deep in the person the potential for becoming a creature of God's love. This sort of love reaches to the unlovely and holds out the same joy we have found in forgiveness. This love is divine in origin and is expressed for friend and foe alike through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Is it possible for us to become genuinely accepting, forgiving and loving? Is it possible for us to accept others—warts and all? Is it possible for Christians to see in others potential and ignore past failure?

I invite you along with myself to drop the stones we hold and quietly admit we are not without sin. I invite you along with myself to realize that the chief work of Jesus is to love as he loved.

Earl F. Cater is pastor of the Eden Mennonite Church, Route 1, Box 319, Inola, OK 74036.


he that is without sin,
let him cast the first...

Tranquility in a frenzied world

Karen D. Schmidt

I had known in the morning that this was going to happen, and my car did not disappoint me. The clutch was slipping and I knew the result. First, the car would not begin to move if it were on even the slightest incline (for example, moving from a parking spot along the side of a street as I was attempting to do). Second, if I should manage to get the car moving, I would be lucky to have the transmission shift into second gear, third being beyond hope.

It was 3:45 p.m., the beginning of rush-hour traffic. Fortunately I was close to the outskirts of the city, with three lanes of traffic in either direction in the city and a four-lane highway most of the way to our hometown. I gave my car a push out onto the road, just over the middle hump (there are some advantages to driving small cars), stopping traffic from both sides while giving the drivers an embarrassed grin of apology. I put on my flashers and slowly began to move down the street, hugging the curb and waving those behind me to pass.

Suddenly I saw road construction ahead of me, blocking my lane. I had just reached my maximum speed of nearly 20 mph and knew that if I were to stop now it would be difficult to get moving again. I turned on my signal for a lane change. The traffic was fairly heavy, but I noticed in my rear-view mirror that there was enough room in the third lane for the cars in the second lane to move over. So I waited for an opportune gap and sidled over into the middle lane. Several cars whipped past me and a few drivers honked. I felt a mixture of apology and anger. After all, this wasn't my fault, and I needed to get home too.

Finally I decided I wouldn't get home any faster by being upset and that I might as well ignore the traffic around me. I became aware of scenes of late fall around me, the farmers working their land, the charred stripes of the fields from burnt straw and the wonderful, blue sky with its puffy, white clouds. As I limped down the highway enjoying the scenery, I was finally able to relax and let my mind slow down to suit my pace and ramble off on its own tangent. I recalled other times when I had been the impatient driver. Since my inclination is to apply my day-to-day experiences to life in general, I became aware of some of the parallels between this experience and my recent past.

Do we take time to create the tranquility for growing relationships?

I have led a busy life, raising a family, studying and being involved in a number of church activities.

A year and a half ago my hectic schedule had come to an abrupt standstill. As the result of an illness I became a semi-invalid and was forced to withdraw from my studies, from nearly all my church involvement, including Sunday morning attendance, and even from most family activities. For many months I felt angry and depressed, blaming God for allowing this to happen and feeling uncertain about the future.

Eventually my inherent impatience came to my rescue. Apparently God can even help us use some of our more negative qualities. I decided I had had enough self-pity and that I better use one of my few remaining resources, my time, to my advantage. My family and friends had been doing a lot of giving to me for quite a while. I needed to learn to appreciate this and to become aware of what I could give in return.

The road of discovery has been enlightening. Some of my discoveries have been more trivial. For instance, I learned that I like cats and country music, much to my husband's dismay and my children's delight.

Some discoveries have been more profound.

I found renewed joy in parenting. My children had often been lost between, "Hurry up, I have to go to class" and, "I don't have time, I have to make supper." Now I had time to listen to their daily chatter about school, friends, hopes and disappointments. We have grown closer because of it.

They have demonstrated a marvelous love and maturity that I would not expect of children their age. This took the form of nightly prayers for my health, helping uncomplainingly with the housework, giving backrubs and making pillows for me.

I discovered in a new way the love of a husband who came home after a full day's work, máde supper, cleaned house, did laundry, looked after the children's needs and still found it possible to care about the wife whose illness made this hectic life necessary. This is the miracle of commitment, which is part of our marriage vows.

I have learned of the power of prayer. Before my illness I had little faith in prayer to heal. However, I have experienced several times of improvement that coincided with the prayers of friends for my health.

Through an enforced dependence on others, I experienced the value of friendship. I have been a self-sufficient person, having learned from the world around me that to be a worthwhile individual means I must manage my life by myself. Suddenly I needed help with all but the most basic tasks of living, and I felt I was a failure as a wife, mother, student and church member. This was brought home to me in a literal sense when several women from church came to clean the house. I felt embarrassed at the thought of someone else seeing our mess. But caring for one another is an essential part of being a member of God's kingdom and so is accepting that caring. So I needed to swallow my inappropriate pride and appreciate their efforts on my behalf. This enabled me to acknowledge my dependence on my Creator and to experience God's sustaining love.

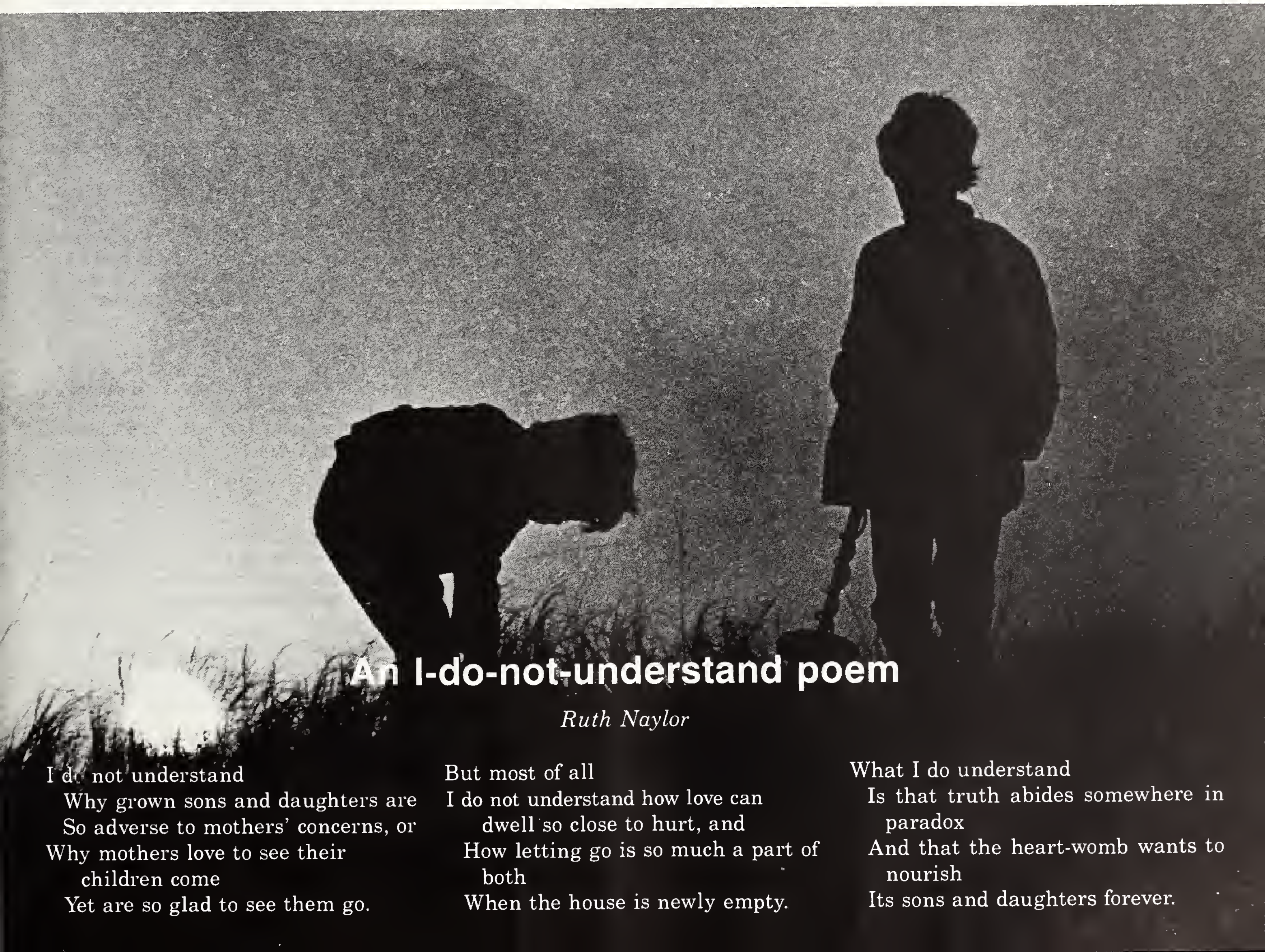
Now that I am on the road to at least partial recovery, I can see the past year and a half as a valuable lesson in priorities. One of the greatest resources God has given us is our time. We are responsible to use that time wisely, and that means each one of us must decide how we can best use our time. We must each choose what is most important.

I found that I had been busy doing worthwhile things at the expense of my relationships to those around me.

I would like to challenge the rest of the rush hour traffic around me to slow down, even if only for short times, and make sure that your priorities are where you would like them to be.

And I would like to encourage others who are limping along not to equate busyness with fulfillment. Use your time to care for those near you. It can be a God-given opportunity to bring a little tranquility into a frenzied world.

Karen D. Schmidt, Box 582, Niverville, MB R0A 1E0, is a member of Niverville Mennonite Church.



An I-do-not-understand poem

Ruth Naylor

I do not understand
  Why grown sons and daughters are
  So adverse to mothers' concerns, or
Why mothers love to see their
    children come
  Yet are so glad to see them go.

But most of all
I do not understand how love can
    dwell so close to hurt, and
  How letting go is so much a part of
    both
  When the house is newly empty.

What I do understand
  Is that truth abides somewhere in
    paradox
  And that the heart-womb wants to
    nourish
  Its sons and daughters forever.

Native Americans have a 1-in-3 chance of having diabetes, compared with the average American citizen's 1-in-20 chance, according to the Friends Committee on National Legislation's Washington Newsletter. Native American students in junior and senior high school have a nationwide dropout rate of 47 percent, and some 22,000 homes, or one-third of all Native American housing, lack adequate water and sewage facilities.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., is inviting applications for the second annual Lectureship Stipend for Women Graduate Students for the school year 1987-88. The graduate stipend of approximately $10,000 is intended to underwrite graduate-level research and part-time teaching at AMBS. Applications for the September 1987-May 1988 term have a deadline of July 30. Application instructions may be requested from Marie Clemens, chairperson, Women's Advisory Committee, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999.

NEWS

General Conference looks ahead

Major long-range plan to come to delegates

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—A major long-range plan will come for approval to triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The plan is the culmination of more than three years of work by conference leaders.

In October 1982 the mood of the conference's General Board was somewhat bleak. It faced a shortage of money to meet budget and a shortage of people to fulfill mission goals.

In response to the situation, the board commissioned a special committee with the following charge: (1) devise a process that will help uncover the underlying causes of the shortages and (2) construct a plan to resolve the problems and move the mission of the conference forward.

That committee (which grew to include representatives from regional conferences) was appropriately dubbed the "development committee." The name was appropriate because the concept of development involves the formulation and articulation of a clear statement of mission for an organization. It also involved constructing a plan for taking the steps needed to fulfill that mission. That's exactly what the committee set out to do.

The first step was to do some evaluation of current conference programs and services and to discern what future needs might be. A series of congregational cluster meetings was held in the spring of 1985. At these meetings representatives from congregations did the evaluation and discernment needed to get started.

The results of that series of meetings are extremely important for the second step—long-range planning. Many hours have been spent reviewing the purpose and goals of the General Conference and making specific plans for how to achieve those goals.

The results of this development plan effort will be presented at triennial sessions in Saskatoon. Delegates will be asked to affirm evangelism as the top priority of the conference for the next three years. Delegates will also be asked to approve a plan for implementing this priority which will include a major fund drive to finance evangelism programs as well as other important programs of the conference.

We are calling ourselves and each other to renewed faith and new commitments of time, energy and money.
Carol J. Suter

Pastor needed

Hope Mennonite Fellowship, North Battleford, Sask., seeks the services of a pastor who has an interest in growing with a small, active congregation and reaching out to the neighborhood.

Please submit resumes to:
Pulpit Committee
1901-96th St.
North Battleford, SK S9A 0J3.

Teacher needed

The Commission on Overseas Mission urgently invites applications for an elementary education teacher in Hwalien, Taiwan. The position is for two-three years, beginning in the fall of 1986.

For information contact:
Personnel Office
Commission on Overseas Mission
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

Director of Youth Orientation Units in Southern Alberta required

The Youth Orientation Units, serving MCC Alberta, invites applications for the above position. The Y.O.U. unit, modeled after the existing unit at Warburg, Alta., will operate a work-oriented program for the development of offenders between the ages of 15 and 17 in the Lethbridge area.

The director will organize and supervise all aspects of the Y.O.U. program. He or she will give leadership and direction to personnel and act as liaison with the Y.O.U. board, government departments, MCC constituency and the local community.

Qualifications include a genuine Christian concern for the physical and social development of young people in trouble with the law. Administrative ability, maturity and vision for the work are required. Education in social sciences and work experience in related fields of rehabilitation are preferred.

Remuneration: salaried.
Applications will be received until **April 30**.

For further information contact or send complete resume, including references and pilgrimage of your faith, to:
Abe Fast
Box 1484
Coaldale, AB TOK OLO
(403) 345-3078.

Plant a tree this spring, says Art Meyer of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Development Education office. Trees are not only beautiful, they provide building materials, furniture, paper, plywood, fiber board, fuel wood and many other products. Trees are also ecologically valuable. They absorb rainwater, provide atmospheric humidity, recycle carbon dioxide and produce oxygen. Trees protect delicate topsoils and provide habitat for plants and animals. Yet the world's trees are in serious trouble. Third World forests are disappearing at incredibly rapid rates. And reforestation is occurring at depressingly slow rates.

The Christian education committee of the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia will sponsor a Drama and Arts Festival at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C., on June 14. Under the theme "Let Us Create for Our Creator," the festival will include exhibits of works of art as well as displays of the performing arts. Plans include seminars and workshops for children, adults and families. For information write Ken Hawkley, 10310 143rd St., Surrey, BC V3T 4T3.

Hubert Brown, a Mennonite pastor from Los Angeles, June Alliman Yoder, a seminary teacher from Elkhart, Ind., and a Christian band called Renaissance are the main attractions for youth at Saskatoon '86. The triennial sessions of the General Conference are scheduled for July 21-27 at several locations in Saskatoon, the youth meeting at the university lecture rooms.

MCC workers report heavy bombing in El Salvador

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—"More bombing has taken place in the last three months than took place in the first four years of the [Salvadoran] war," writes Blake Ortman, Mennonite Central Committee worker in El Salvador.

While North American press reports are dominated by news of the war in Nicaragua, the war in El Salvador is in its seventh year. Ortman reports that Salvadorans fear the situation will continue to get worse.

Nathan and Elaine Zook Barge, MCC workers near the capital, report that there has been consistent and heavy bombing of guerrilla-controlled areas near their town. During one five-hour period they counted 38 500-pound bombs dropped on the nearby Guazapa volcano.

They write, "We watched with a displaced family who had a clear view of the mountain at the edge of town. They had a 13-day-old baby trying to sleep inside the champa (shack) in a hammock. The mother was very concerned because he jumped every time a bomb exploded and finally brought him outside to sleep in the security of her arms. She expressed sadness that her child was a boy because she has lost hope that this war will end soon. She fears even this 13-day-old child will someday have to fight."

Last month the army surrounded and captured over 400 civilians farming on the slopes of the Guazapa volcano and burned all their possessions except for the clothes on their backs and took them to refugee camps in San Salvador. The army strategy is to clean civilians out of conflict areas so that the guerrillas can no longer depend on them for food and other support.

The Catholic Church is taking a stand in favor of the rights of those living in war areas, says Ortman. The church has called for an end to the bombing and has requested that civilians not be forced to move from areas of conflict. The archbishop has traveled openly in guerrilla-controlled territory and listened to testimonies of Salvadorans living there.

At the end of last year Salvadoran Archbishop Rivera Damas proposed a 10-day Christmas truce. The guerrilla forces agreed to the cease-fire, and President Napoleon Duarte also accepted. But the Salvadoran army refused to observe the truce, and several commanders claimed not to know anything about it.

The army's refusal to honor the truce agreed upon by President Duarte raises serious questions about who is in charge in El Salvador. But Ortman says that Duarte's lack of control over the military is not a new trend but a "deterioration of old trends."

Unfortunately it seems that earlier efforts by the church and other forces to encourage dialogue between the guerrillas and the Salvadoran army have evaporated. Ortman says that Duarte seems to be "moving away from rhetoric about dialogue. He has stated that defense is the number one priority." The government refused to respond to two well-defined proposals for dialogue late last year from the guerrilla forces.

El Salvador is not only fighting a war against guerrillas but is struggling for economic survival. Although most other Latin American countries are facing economic crises, "other countries are not trying to fight a war at the same time," says Ortman.

The government is calling for a cutback in public spending that means even less money for education, health, agriculture and transportation. This cutback is needed to keep the military supplied with what it needs to fight the war. One labor group complained, "We've been dying in the war and now we are being condemned to die of hunger." There have been several large demonstrations protesting the economic cutbacks.

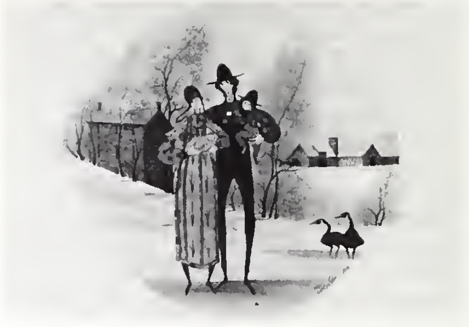
Ortman works with refugees living in camps in San Salvador. The tin-roofed wooden shacks surrounded by barbed wire and overcrowded church buildings have been home for thousands of refugees during the last five years. Ortman writes, "Refugees used to talk about the war maybe ending in the next year to two. That hope is fading."

The war continues to grind on largely because of major U.S. military grants to the Salvadoran army. In 1985 El Salvador received $128 million in direct military aid, $194 million in war-related aid and $130 million in other economic aid from the United States. This $452 million accounted for about half of the Salvadoran national budget. *Joy Hofer*

Salvadoran refugee girl whose family was forced to flee El Salvador to neighboring Honduras. She along with over 1 million other Salvadorans are refugees waiting for the war to end.

Divorce rates in the United States increased last year to a decade high, according to a new report by the National Center for Health Statistics. The study found that 1,187,000 couples divorced in 1985—the most divorces since 1980. About one-half of U.S. marriages end in divorce.

P. Buckley Moss, well-known for her paintings of the Amish and Mennonites, is donating proceeds from 1,000 copies of her print titled "Family Love" (right) to the relief and development work of Mennonite Central Committee in Africa. She hopes to raise $100,000 through this project. The printes sell for $105 each and may be ordered from MCC/Africa Fund, Box M, Akron, PA 17501.



Can the church help the unemployed?

Elkhart, Ind. (MCC U.S.)—"Roger, Susan, Peter."

"John, Jim, Mary, Merrill."

"Angie, Frank, Juan, Carol. . . ."

The names lifted up in prayer continued until they totaled 137. Thirty-five people with heads bowed sat by the fireplace at Camp Menno Haven, participants in a workshop on "Congregations Helping Job Seekers."

Worship leader Ron Kennel asked us to think of individuals we knew looking for jobs and to share their names as we prayed around the circle. The extent of the pain and challenge of unemployment and vocational change became dramatically clear as so many names were lifted up.

The purpose of the workshop, held March 17-18 at Tiskilwa, Ill., was to equip congregational leaders to help their communities discover new ways to care for and aid members looking for jobs.

The continuing farm crisis was illustrated in stories from Ohio to Nebraska of families whose dreams of raising children on the farm and caring for God's good earth were shattered. When pastor Walter Smeltzer described the impact on his congregation of the massive layoffs at the Caterpillar company in Peoria, we were reminded that the majority of Mennonites work in non-farm occupations where job security is no longer certain. Mennonite minorities in urban areas are especially vulnerable to the harsh realities of a marketplace where a growing number must work in lower-paying service jobs, if they can find any job at all.

For most Mennonites, responsible work performance has always been a high value. Losing a job is an emotional shock. When workshop participants were asked to report emotions they had experienced or observed in others when forced into unemployment, the blackboard filled with words such as anger, hopelessness, fear, grief, frustration.

Career counselor Fred Litwiller from Goshen (Ind.) College led the group in practical exercises designed to help individuals identify their skills and utilize them in the job search. When job experience is properly analyzed, many people are surprised to discover how many marketable skills they have.

In discussing how Mennonites deal with financial adversity, the subject of bankruptcy surfaced repeatedly. Some sense a fundamental shift in church attitudes in the direction of more acceptance of this last resort in certain situations.

The idea that bankruptcy may be the modern legal equivalent of the year of jubilee was intriguing for some but problematic for many. We were reminded that the jubilee concept is expressive of a way of life, not just a solution to a crisis.

The concluding session focused on how the church can support members in job transition. A congregation in Ohio that has helped settle five Asian families has offered to assist any family looking for new employment away from their home community.

One source for help is a telephone hotline sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Farm Task Force and staffed by John and Nancy Halder in Parnell, Iowa. The toll-free number outside Iowa is (800) 553-8371, in Iowa (319) 646-2300.

Job seekers need a supportive group to talk with about their situation. The sense of failure is often overwhelming. One person said, "We need to change the attitudes in our congregation so that people realize joblessness is not a dread disease."

Congregations were encouraged to appoint a resource person or group to be available to members to work through financial and vocational problems.

To deepen understanding of the spiritual issues involved, the worship meditations presented by Iowa pastor Ron Kennel at the workshop will be available from MCC U.S., Box M, Akron, PA 17501.

A resource that many farm communities have found useful is a two-part video, *Another Family Farm*, available free from the Division for Parish Services, Lutheran Church in America, 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19129, (215) 438-5600.

The MCC U.S. Farm Task Force and the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, who sponsored the workshop with the help of a financial grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid, are considering further steps to help congregations help job seekers. *Edgar Metzler*

Student services position

Full- or part-time student services position available at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Includes responsibility as resident director in a residence hall and possible other student service duties as appropriate.

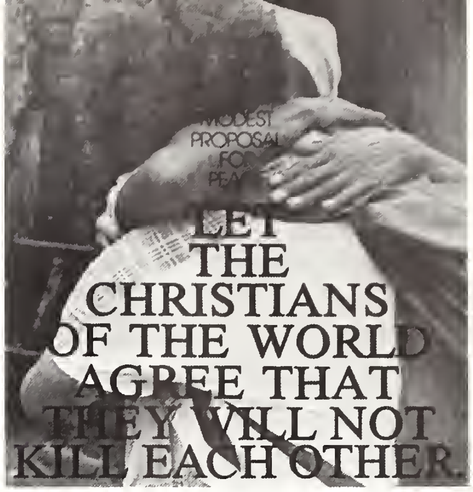
Responsible for the administration and management of the residence hall facility, including development, ongoing supervision, training and evaluation of student staff. Master's degree in counseling or related field preferred, bachelor's degree considered. Salary based on education and experience.

Applications accepted until April 30 to:

Ron Flaming
Dean of Students
Bethel College
North Newton, KS 67117.

The Council on Church and Media will develop the theme of "Marketing Our Mission" during its second annual conference at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., May 27-28. Keynote speaker will be Daniel Kauffman, assistant to the president of Goshen (Ind.) College for special projects. A second major presentation will be given by Judy Weidman, editor and director of Religious News Service, who will speak on "The Roles of News in Marketing Our Mission." Those planning to attend the conference should send a $50 registration fee to Council on Church and Media, 1451, Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

"A modest proposal for peace: Let the Christians of the world agree that they will not kill each other." A poster with those words has caught the attention of a Marine from Chicago, a U.S. student at a Southern Baptist seminary, a Ugandan church leader and church workers in Central America. Over 6,000 copies have been circulated in the United States, Canada, Africa, Central America, Europe and Japan since Mennonite Central Committee produced the poster in mid-1984. The 18-by-22-inch poster is available from MCC, Box M, Akron, PA 17501, for $1 each or $5 for eight copies.


MODEST PROPOSAL FOR PEACE
LET THE CHRISTIANS OF THE WORLD AGREE THAT THEY WILL NOT KILL EACH OTHER.

Wisconsin Mennonites boost membership nearly 50 percent

Waukesha, Wis. (GCMC)—The only Mennonite congregation in Wisconsin affiliated with either the Mennonite Church or the General Conference boosted its membership by nearly 50 percent when 10 new members joined the church Jan. 12. The four adult baptisms and six transfers brought total membership of the tiny outreach church to 33.

The Mennonite Fellowship in Waukesha, Wis., affiliated with both Mennonite organizations, is pastored by Clarice and Lawrence Kratz and serves metropolitan Milwaukee and Waukesha (a smaller city on the western border of the metropolitan area). The fellowship has grown from an average Sunday attendance of 18 in 1982 to an average attendance of 60 today.

Membership has increased from four active members in 1982 to 33.

The fellowship meets in a historic Victorian house, which also houses the Kratz family. The adult Bible study class meets in one corner of the front parlor, which has been remodeled to accommodate the worship service as well. The kitchen, basement and pastors' study all double as Sunday school classrooms, while an upstairs bedroom houses nursery care. The congregation maintains close personal and spiritual ties while welcoming new faces into the circle nearly every week.

Job openings

Director, **skill trainer** and **direct-care staff** are needed at **Oregon Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.**, (group homes for developmentally disabled adults).

Send inquiries to:
Jane Toews
Teaching Research
345 Monmouth Ave.
Monmouth, OR 97361
(503) 838-1220, ext. 401.

Position available

Director for residential home for four developmentally disabled adults in Fresno, Calif. Live-in with seminary/college student assistants.

For more information, contact:
Duane Heffelbower
Central California Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.
1010 G St.
Reedley, CA 93654
(209) 638-6911.

Accountant/bookkeeper

Mennonite World Conference is interviewing applicants for this full-time, salaried position to be filled by **Sept. 1**. Responsibilities include: management of computer fund accounting system, budgeting and financial planning. Qualifications include computer and fund accounting experience. Accounting degree preferred.

Reply to:
Jane Friesen
Mennonite World Conference
528 E. Madison St.
Lombard, IL 60148
(312) 953-2320.

Position available

Spruce Lake Retreat has an opening for a **food service director**. Spruce Lake Retreat is a Christian retreat center and camp owned by Franconia Mennonite Camp Association, located in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. This is a salaried, year-round position with housing and other benefits provided.

Contact:
Paul Beiler, Administrator
Spruce Lake Retreat
Route 1, Box 605
Canadensis, PA 18325
(717) 595-7505.

Begun in 1976 by Mennonite Board of Missions, Deaf Ministries is a resource to deaf and hearing persons and congregations.

DEAF MINISTRIES OFFERS:

- Resource persons for presentations to congregations and groups
- **Signing** (bimonthly newsletter)
- Annual Deaf Ministries Leadership Retreat
- Annual Laurelville retreat for deaf people, their family and friends
- Support to local Deaf Ministries programs
- Loaning library (books and videotapes)
- Ephphatha scholarships to train persons in deaf ministries
- Coordination of interpreters at churchwide events

Ten Years
1976-1986
Mennonite Church Deaf Ministries

For more information, contact.
Mennonite Board of Missions
Box 370 • Elkhart IN 46515-0370

Describing apartheid as a major cause of hunger in South Africa and neighboring African countries, Bread for the World has announced that its 50,000-member national Christian network will join in efforts to win passage of 1986 legislation that imposes U.S. sanctions against the South African government.

About 25 scholars and other church people met in Prague Jan. 24-27 to discuss the Jan Hus Reformation of the 15th century and the Radical or Anabaptist Reformation. Participants, which included four Mennonites, discussed the significance and authority of the Bible, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, how eschatology can guide ethical practice, and matters related to economics. One theme that surfaced was the tension between the historic ideals of the early leaders and the reality of church practice today.

Accountability in the Church: *A Study Guide for Congregations* by Helmut Harder has been sent to all member congregations of the General Conference. It prompts discussion and gives guidance on two fronts: the relationship of a congregation to its pastor and other church leadership, and the relationship of a congregation to its denomination. Copies can be ordered for $1.25 (either U.S. or Canada) plus postage from 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, or Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

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workers

Helen and *Rudy Baergen*, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, have been appointed to a four-year term of service under the Commission on Overseas Mission at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Cochabamba, Bolivia. They plan to leave around the middle of August for a year of language study in Costa Rica. They have two children.

Patty Bates, First Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, has accepted a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term as assistant director of Western Solidarity, part of the Denver East service unit. She is a 1985 graduate of Austin College, Sherman, Texas. Her parents are Daryl Bates and Judy Johns.

Lynell Bergen, Wildwood Church, Saskatoon, has begun a two-year MVS term as women's advocate and shelter staff person of the Johnson County (Kansas) Association for Battered Persons. She is a 1984 graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. Her parents are John and Martha Bergen.

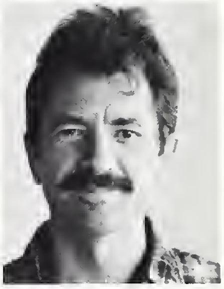
Dorothy Bush, St. Louis, has begun a one-year MVS term as a child-care worker at the Salvation Army Residence for Children in St. Louis. Her parents are Audrey and Joseph Bush of Farmington, Pa.

Hank Connolly, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Amityville, N.Y., has begun a two-year MVS term as a counselor at the Downtown Emergency Center in Seattle. His mother is Mary Connolly of Massapequa, N.Y.

April and *Paul Dixon*, Priory Park Baptist Church, Guelph, Ont., have begun two-year MVS terms as gardener and food service manager/nutrition educator, respectively, at the Pleasant Valley Outdoor Center in Woodstock, Ill. They received their education at the universities in Guelph and Toronto. His parents are Lilian and Robert Dixon of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Hers are Verna and William Killam of Newmarket, Ont.

Baergens

Bush


Connolly

Bates

Bergen

Dixons

Rudy and *Sue Friesen*, Gretna (Man.) Bergthaler Church, have been appointed to a three-year COM term as bookkeeper and guesthouse hosts in Taipei, Taiwan. Along with their three children, they plan to leave in July.

Susan and *Werner Froese*, Eigenheim Church, Rosthern, Sask., have been appointed to a three-year COM term in pastoral leadership at Burwalde Church in Swift Colony near Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua, Mexico, beginning in September. They have three children.

Gary and *Jean Isaac*, Swiss Church, Whitewater, Kan., have been appointed to a three-year COM/Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission term beginning in August. They will be teaching Bible among the African Independent Churches in the Transkei, Southern Africa. They have two children.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries has announced the following appointments: *Gary E. Martin* to a two-year term as instructor in evangelism and church planting; *Ruth Ann Gardner* as registrar; *Harold D. Thiessen* as coordinator of church and seminary relations effective Jan. 1, 1987; *Richard A. Kauffman* as acting president during Marlin E. Miller's sabbati-

Roelf and Juliette Kuitse, Elkhart, Ind., left Feb. 10 for an extended visit to east and southern Africa on behalf of Mennonite Central Committee and several Mennonite mission boards. Roelf, professor of missions and associate director of the Mission Training Center at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, will combine teaching on Islam and Christianity in Africa and one-to-one contact with Mennonite mission and service workers. He also plans to visit leaders in African Independent Churches.

Congregations or conferences who give first-year students financial support for studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., will have the amount matched up to $500 by either of the AMBS schools. The matching grant will not affect other financial aid available to new students. Contact Richard A. Kauffman for Goshen Biblical Seminary or Henry Poettcker for Mennonite Biblical Seminary at 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

Housekeeper wanted

Housekeeper—light maintenance, year-round voluntary service position.

For more information contact:
Curt Bechler
Camp Friedenswald
15406 Watercress Drive
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(616) 476-2426.

Latin American workshop

Latin American workshop in Bogotá, Colombia, July 6-Aug. 4. Observation, experience, analysis and interpretation of Latin American reality from a Christian commitment to liberation. The cost for this ninth workshop is $649, sponsored by Program of Conscientization for North Americans (PCNA).

Contact:
Paul E. Stucky, coordinator
1614 Market
Galveston, TX 77550
(409) 762-1391.

Assistant pastor needed

First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a full-time assistant pastor, commencing Sept. 1. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry and assisting with pulpit duties. Ability to give leadership in church music would be an asset.

For information or application contact:
Archie Epp, congregational chairman
1513 Argyle Ave.
Saskatoon, SK S7H 2W3
(306) 374-1516.

RECORD

Friesens

J. Plenert

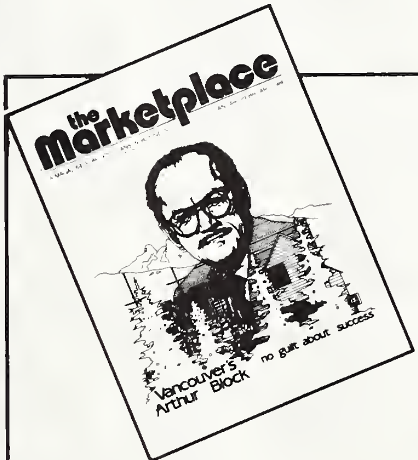
S. Plenert

Froeses

Isaacs

cal leave during the 1986-87 academic year. *Paul M. Miller* was named professor emeritus of practical theology.

Janet and *Steve Plenert*, Saanich Community Church, Victoria, B.C., and Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C., respectively, have been appointed to three-year Overseas Mission Volunteer terms sponsored by COM. They plan to leave in August. After language study in Brussels, they will be helping with the youth hostel and guesthouse/missionary service in Kinshasa, Zaire.



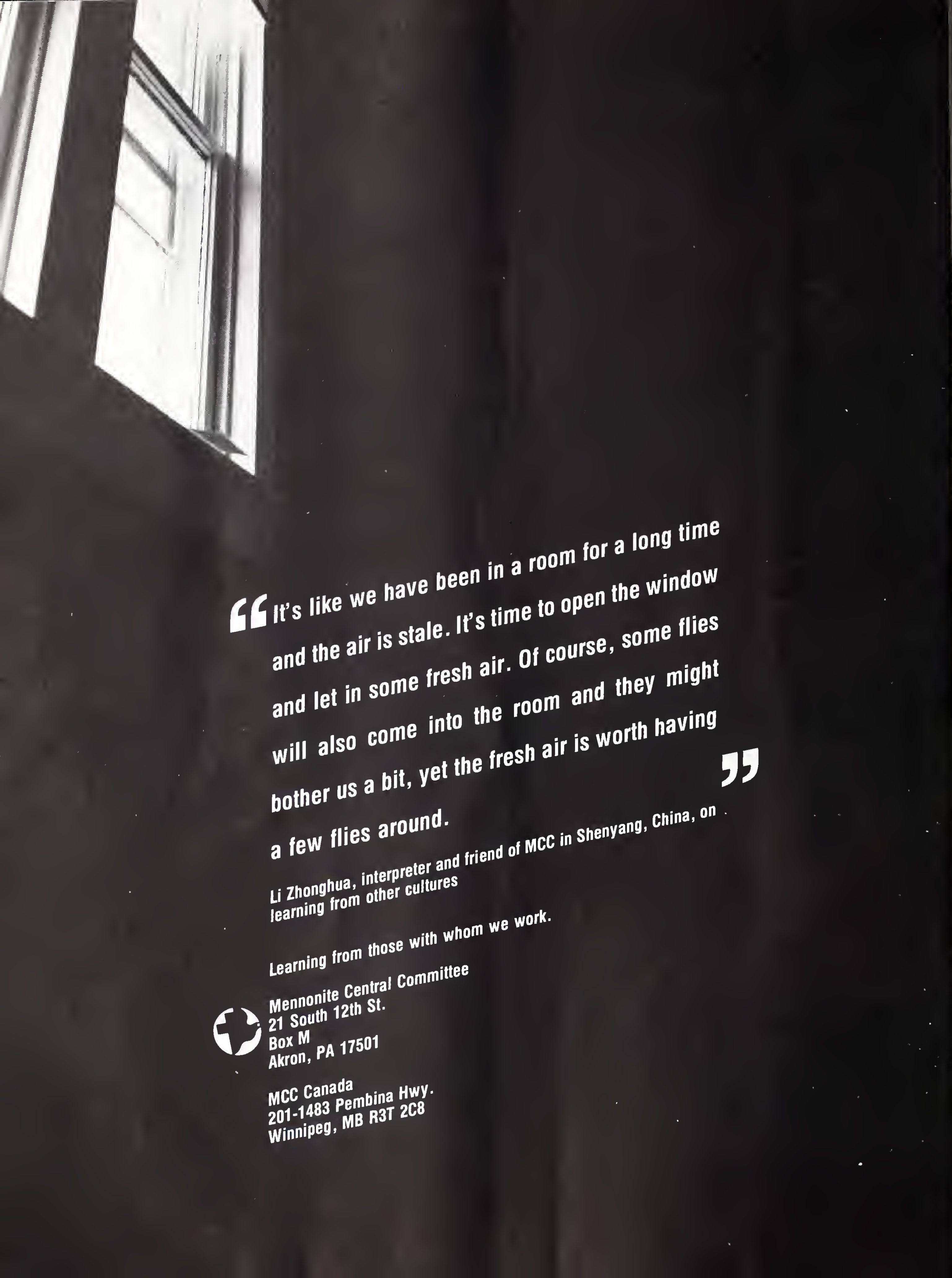
Keep in touch with ***The Marketplace,*** a magazine of business, faith and ethics. Now in a new bi-monthly format with more ideas, articles and inspiration for Christians on the job.

The Marketplace — where faith and work get together.

Rates: $10 a year; $18 for two years

Name ____________________
Address ____________________
City ____________________
State/Prov. ____________ Postal Code ________

Clip and send to: Mennonite Economic Development Associates,
400-280 Smith St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K2



“It’s like we have been in a room for a long time and the air is stale. It’s time to open the window and let in some fresh air. Of course, some flies will also come into the room and they might bother us a bit, yet the fresh air is worth having a few flies around.”

Li Zhonghua, interpreter and friend of MCC in Shenyang, China, on learning from other cultures

Learning from those with whom we work.

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th St.
Box M
Akron, PA 17501

MCC Canada
201-1483 Pembina Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8

BETHEL
COLLEGE
MUSIC
CAMP
'86

FEATURING

- concert choirs
- chamber vocal ensembles
- string ensembles
- wind ensembles
- jazz groups
- music theatre
- music theory
- acting movement
- conducting
- pop/jazz improvisation
- voice lessons
- instrument lessons
- keyboard lessons

JUNE 8-13

Scholarships available to students in All-State Chorus, Orchestra, or Band, or who receive a I-rating on solos at State Music Contest.

**For more information contact:
Melinda Yoder
Bethel College
North Newton, KS 67117
Phone (316) 283-2500**

Commission On Education

How does the Commission on Education serve congregations?

Mennonite Service Venture

Individual youth (ages 14-18) or entire youth groups can spend time together working, praying and studying the Bible in a variety of settings in North America and abroad.

Mennonite Marriage Encounter

A weekend marriage program for couples who wish to learn more about each other and how to better communicate. This program is for *all* marriages.

ACT (Aid to Christian Teaching)

A weekend hands-on experience for church school teachers, nursery to adult, their superintendents, pastors and Christian education committee members.

Student Ministries

The "It Matters Where You Scatter" program utilizes a Contact Person Network to help scattered Mennonite students and young adults keep contact with their church roots. Also, a packet is available to help congregations develop and evaluate Congregational Student Aid programs at our church-related schools.

Foundation Series Resource Persons

A person is available in each district and province to provide assistance to Christian educators in using the Foundation Series or with other education questions.

Publishing

"The Foundation Series"—Sunday school curriculum for children, youth and adults
"Uniform Series"—Sunday school curriculum for adults
Builder—Christian education magazine
With—Youth magazine
"Faith and Life Bible Studies"
Adult study electives
The Mennonite Hymnal
Church membership materials

And much, much more!

Your prayer and financial support for the Commission on Education are appreciated and necessary to continue this and other ministries for the church.

Meet John (J. W.) Sprunger, Executive Secretary of the Commission on Education. If you have any questions about these or other services of the Commission on Education please contact J. W. at the address below.

General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

**Commission on
Education**

722 Main Street Box 347
Newton KS 67114-0347
316-283-5100

RESOURCES

Preparation for Marriage and **Teens and Sexuality** are available from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. In obedience to a constituency asking for help in studying human sexuality, these resources were written under the direction of the Commission on Education. They sell for $9.95 and $5.95 (U.S.), respectively.

Karl Gaspar, a lay church leader in Mindanao, Philippines, was arrested in 1983 and detained for 22 months. During that time he wrote **How Long? Prison Reflections of Karl Gaspar**. From June to December 1985 he kept a diary of his experiences working with poor farmers on the island of Negros in the Philippines. **Be Not Afraid** ($.50) contains excerpts from that journal. Both pieces are available from Synapses, 1821 W. Cullerton, Chicago, IL 60608.

Rejoice in the Lord: A Hymn Companion to the Scriptures (Eerdmans, 1985) is organized according to the canonical order of the Bible. It contains 624 hymns, including 62 Psalms, and is available in hardcover for $12.95.

In February 1978 Henry and Twyla Lubben, 73 and 65, accepted their 52nd foster child, a battered infant girl. Later they won a court battle and adopted Christina, their 10th adopted child. **Christina's World** (Zondervan, 1985) tells the story of government insensitivity in this case. It is available for $5.95.

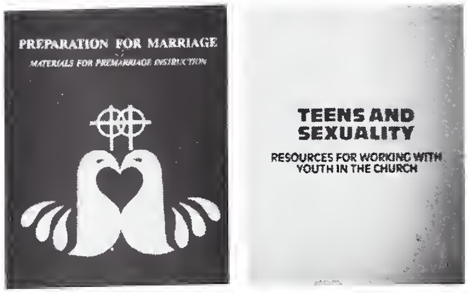
Amish Crib Quilts (Good Books, 1985) contains 78 color plates, stories and poetry written by children and reflections on life's seasons from one Amish child's perspective. It costs $15.95.

A three-part study/action packet for Christians who want to be engaged in Amnesty International's campaign to abolish torture has been completed by American Christians for the Abolition of Torture, 6117 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144, (215) 849-7450. It costs $3.95 plus $1 postage.

Faith Refined by Fire, a study of 1 Peter by David Schroeder, and **Have the Mind of Christ**, a study of 1 Corinthians 1-7 by Marilyn Peters Kliewer, are available from Faith and Life Press for $4.95 (U.S.) each.

Three oversize (9 x 12) picture storybooks make up The Good Thoughts Series (Herald Press, 1985) by Jane Hoober Peifer, with photographs by Marilyn Peifer Nolt: **Good Thoughts at Bedtime**, **Good Thoughts About Me** and **Good Thoughts About People**. Each book sells for $2.95 ($4 in Canada).

Mennonite Quilts and Pieces (Good Books, 1985) by Judy Schroeder Tomlonson includes not only color photos of prairie and farmland scenes and of quilts but stories from the quilters themselves. It sells for $15.95.


PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE
MATERIALS FOR PREMARRIAGE INSTRUCTION
TEENS AND SEXUALITY
RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH IN THE CHURCH

Leland Ryken presents an argument for the importance of literature in **Windows to the World: Literature in Christian Perspective** (Zondervan, 1985). It costs $7.95.

Jesus the Pharisee: A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus (Paulist Press, 1985) by Harvey Falk proposes a fresh approach to Jewish-Christian relations based on this thesis: "All of the criticism of Jews and Pharisees contained in the Gospels was directed only at the School of Shammai, not at the School of Hillel, which is followed by modern Jews." It costs $8.95.

Brave New People: Ethical Issues at the Commencement of Life (Eerdmans, 1985) by D. Gareth Jones attempts to discover what principles are of importance in making decisions about human life around the time of its inception. It costs $8.95.

In the new paperback edition of **Sabbath Time** (Winston, 1985), Tilden Edwards argues the need for a day of rest and its importance as a balance to the rapid pace of our everyday lives. It costs $8.95.

A Sanctuary Church, a 40-minute VHS (½") videotape, is now available from the Audiovisual Library of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100. Rental is $3.50.

The motion picture **Hazel's People** is available in videocassette from the People's Place, Intercourse, PA 17534.

He Came Preaching Peace (Herald Press, 1985) includes a dozen of John H. Yoder's Bible lectures. It is a Christian Peace Shelf selection and costs $8.95 ($12.10 in Canada).

Friends World Committee for Consultation has published in English Ham Sok Hon's **Queen of Suffering, A Spiritual History of Korea**. Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985, Ham Sok Hon is a Korean Quaker beloved in his country as a kind of Gandhi figure. It is available from 1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215) 241-7251.

Sing for Peace (Herald Press, 1985), with words and illustrations by Lois Lenski and music by Clyde Robert Bulla, is a resource for teaching peace to children. It is published in a 16-page horizontal format (10 x 7) for $1.50 ($2.05 in Canada).

The **Proceedings** of the IXth Assembly of the Mennonite World Conference, held in July 1984 at Strasbourg, France, are available for $1.50 from MWC, 528 E. Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148.

Using the Bible in Groups (Westminster Press, 1985) by Roberta Hestenes is a comprehensive guide for forming and building Bible study groups. It costs $6.95.

An enduring classic for three decades, **The Bible Speaks to You** (Westminster Press, 1985) by Robert McAfee Brown has been reprinted. It is an introduction to the Bible and its relevance to modern life. It costs $8.95.

Living As If: How Positive Faith Can Change Your Life (Westminster Press, 1985) by William R. Miller explores the meaning and influence our belief systems have on our lives. It costs $7.95.

John C. Purdy relates the wisdom of 12 biblical parables to the modern work arena in **Parables at Work** (Westminster Press, 1985). It costs $7.95.

The Mennonites in Arizona, a 200-page history, is available for $9.95 plus $2 postage from Henry D. Esch, 8112 N. Seventh St., Phoenix, AZ 85020.

The problem of addiction in our culture is not a drug or alcohol problem, says William Lenters in **The Freedom We Crave: Addiction—the Human Condition** (Eerdmans, 1985). It is a people problem. The story of addiction is really the drama of the human spirit responding to the stress of life. The book sells for $9.95.

The NIV Study Bible (Zondervan, 1985) is the culmination of seven years of research and development and is the only study Bible based on the New International Version. It costs $33.95 in hardcover.

LETTERS

Serving the hibakusha

In a recent issue we read of the Goerings' program of person-to-person contact with "hibakusha." We are very interested in that project. However, how do we contact them so we can find details about it?

Incidentally, *The Mennonite* is one of the best church papers from our perspective. The Mennonites are doing a super work as far as Christian churches are concerned. You do more per member than most, if not all other churches, in service that counts for the kingdom. *Ray Hilty, 1914 W. Bataan Drive, Dayton, OH 45420*

March 25

Editor's note: The requested address was sent to Ray.

Usury is a sad cycle

I appreciate the articles on the farm crisis (March 11 issue). The writers agree that there is no immediate solution and that probably commodity prices will continue to decline and cause further bankruptcies. I doubt any of this will have much impact on the non-farm community until corresponding declines in wages and residential and commercial real estate prices affect a greater percentage of the population.

We function in a usury economy. If there are $10 in existence and someone borrows that $10 and promises to repay $11, the borrower has agreed to the impossible. If the lender has the power to create additional dollars, the borrower is totally dependent on the lender. In a mass economy based on usury, if insufficient dollars are created to meet the needs of borrowers, "tight" money and bankruptcies result. If more than enough dollars are created, credit is easy and additional borrowing is encouraged. Whoever controls the process controls the economy.

Position opening

Chief executive officer, Kings View Corporation

Requirements/responsibilities/duties as per bylaws. Salary negotiable.

Application deadline: **May 1**

Direct resumes and inquiries to:
Theodore W. Loewen, board member
Kings View Corporation
Office of Personnel
1470 W. Herndon Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711.

Since 1980 the net effect of the banking system has been a decline in the capital required to meet debt service. As long as this continues, a steady collapse of the farming sector is inevitable. The rest of the economy will follow.

At some point the process will be reversed. Sufficient capital will be created, and a new boom in commodity prices will be under way. Farmers will respond by borrowing to meet increased demand for output at higher prices. When the crunch recurs, there will be another outpouring of articles like the recent ones.

As long as usury banking is tolerated, these crises will occur repeatedly. The Bible is quite clear about usury. Perhaps we need to do our homework as Christians and consider our participation in and response to our economic system.

"Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother" (Deuteronomy 23:19).

"Owe no man anything but to love one another" (Romans 13:8).

"The borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7). *John Burton, 12999 W. 20th, Golden, CO 80401*

March 25

Blasphemous libel?

The imagination of homosexuals really does run wild. Who would ever have thought of suggesting that there are "gay" flowers ("Ice Cream and Sexuality," March 11 issue, p. 115). In biology I learned about cross-pollination and self-pollination but never of homosexual pollination. Possibly we should resurrect Aristophenes from Plato's *Symposium* to poke fun at some of the outrageous myths presented here.

But the letter confronts us on a more serious note with the question of "blasphemous libel."

The letter has the gall to suggest that the God who tells us through Paul "not to associate with the sexually immoral" who call themselves brothers (1 Corinthians 5:9ff) has purposefully placed homosexuals in the church so that we may love them. Jesus says, ". . . every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven" (Matthew 12:31).

Paul tells us that while we were still powerless and sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5). Jesus loves us with a redemptive love. So now when we are alive to God in Christ Jesus, we should not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. Just as the Romans used to offer parts of their body in slavery to impurity and ever-increasing wickedness, they should now offer them in holiness to God (6:11f, 19f).

To suggest that God calls the church to love in any other way is blasphemous libel. *David Janzen, Box 594, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0*

March 25

Let's urge forgiveness

Thanks to you and to Helen Johns for the article "Let Peace Begin with Me" (Jan. 14 issue). The song "Let There Be Peace on Earth" is part of the regular liturgy in a church which I attend occasionally. Its beautiful melody and verse speak gently and firmly to a desire to be redeemed from that in our lives which alienates us from our brothers and sisters.

Last Sunday Gerald Jampolsky, author of the book *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*, spoke in the same church. He spoke of forgiveness. Forgiveness every moment in every situation. At this level, forgiveness does not turn into self-righteousness, nor does it pronounce the evil in others as being acceptable. Instead, total forgiveness allows God's love to direct us toward love, peace and certainty of purpose.

There are many articles in *The Mennonite*, which tell of injustices and evil around and about us in the world. It is certainly important to point out where suffering and dangers exist. But alleviating suffering, that is, bringing about peace, must go beyond taking sides in the conflicts which brought about the tragic conditions.

In Jampolsky's book *Teach Only Love* he related an incident in which Mother Teresa, at a conference, is asked to sign a statement opposing the nuclear arms race. After she prays, she indicates that she cannot sign because "if I signed, I would be loving some people and not others because I would be taking sides in a controversy."

Harshly judging others and ourselves hinders our efforts toward peace. Forgiveness opens the way to peace. *Orville Goering, 892 Pepper Tree Court, Santa Clara, CA 95051*

March 25

Mission is their family life

Donna Entz

Marté was embarrassed to say it, but she shyly confessed to others attending the women's seminar, "There is real love in our home." In her Burkina Faso setting, that love is evident, and people are learning to know Christ because of it.

Marté Tiera and her husband, Philip Coulibale, are faithfully sharing their love for Christ in the village of Djigouera, a bumpy hour's drive north of Orodara. Both were born in ethnic Bobo villages in Mali, just north of the Burkina Faso border.

Philip was raised as an orphan in the home of relatives. The family were fetish worshipers, but Philip somehow evaded such worship. The Christian and Missionary Alliance church was strong in that area, and Philip became interested in Christianity. He studied diligently to learn the Bambara trade language into which the Bible was translated. He enjoyed the Bible stories. Philip chose to follow Christ and was baptized as a young teenager.

Through problems in the church, interest waned and many people left. But Philip and several friends continued to attend the local church.

Marté enjoyed several years of formal French education during her childhood. When Marté and Philip's marriage was being arranged by their families, she made her own commitment to Christ and was baptized.

After the birth of their first child, relationships with Philip's family became strained. Philip's brother wanted him to work on Sunday, which Philip thought was wrong to do. Finally he, Marté and their little baby set off to look for farm land in Burkina Faso. They lived in several areas, often isolated from other believers and remote from other people. This was a time of maturing in their faith in the Lord.

Marté remembers how the other women ridiculed her for not sneaking grain out of the family granary as they did. A woman could sell the pilfered grain for profit to buy nice clothes or dishes for herself. But Marté felt the Lord helped her to say no to such deeds that would have brought disharmony and food shortages to her own family. The Lord was teaching her to be a Christian wife and mother. In her tribe fieldwork was men's work. She remembered how her mother would sit at home doing nothing while her father slaved in the field. So whenever she had time and the girls could help with housework, she went to the fields to help her husband, Philip, especially with the big job of weeding.

It was during a time when they lived without other Christians nearby that their daughter, Deborah, became seriously ill. She had a high fever and partial paralysis. They suspected polio, but medical help was far away. Nor was there money for a doctor. So they prayed many times a day. Neighbors made fun of them because they didn't try to obtain traditional African medicine. Philip and Marté said, "God can heal and he will heal Deborah too, if that is the way it is to be."

They carried Deborah out to the field and laid her under a shade tree when they had to cultivate the field. Slowly, after several days, she regained control of her muscles. But then they discovered the girl was blind for awhile. By now they knew God was helping them. Deborah regained full use of her eyes. Since that time they tell how God is their only and best doctor. Their health record has been better than for many people who go for medical help.

Several years ago they felt a need to move on. Their move to their present home was confirmed for Marté in a dream. She had not been anxious for another move. But they moved onto new land about 35 kilometers (21 miles) north of Orodara. They settled much like homesteaders. But first they built a grass shelter as a church building. Then they constructed a house to sleep in.

Philip only had one bullock to use as a draft animal to help with the cultivating. Two were needed to pull a plow. They bought a second on credit, but both animals died of sickness. So there they were, back to cultivating with a short-handled hoe, doubled over, trying to grow enough crops for the year's supply of food and to pay off debts. The rains were not abundant. As a result food was short. Yet they continued to welcome anyone and everyone to their home, sharing abundantly of their meager resources.

Philip and Marté have had a great impact on their little bush community. Their neighbors are also people who have left their previous homes for varied reasons to settle here. Several have now made commitments to Christ through the hospitality of Philip and

Africa is a continent with some of the proudest monuments in the world. It is also a continent of vast variety and sharp contrasts. In this continent some of the greatest evidences of the Holy Spirit's ongoing work are taking place each day. Results of mission work, similar to that in the article, are common in many African countries.

There is a hunger of the body and of the soul in many parts of Africa.

Some come to join Marté and Philip around the fire after dark for food, singing and testimonies as the family shares its life together.

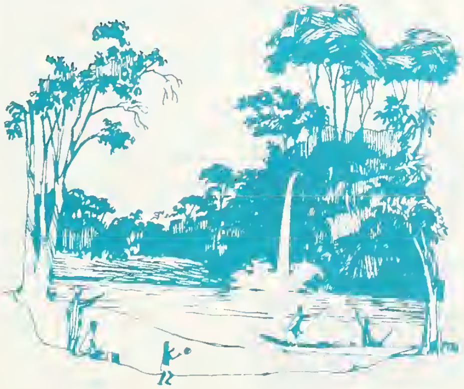
During the day Marté's teenage daughters work beside their mother, learning to do all the hard tasks of living in the bush. They grind flour on the stone, pound grain in the mortar, extract oil from a nut and collect baobab leaves from the trees to make a nutritious gravy. They must work hard. Yet they are grateful for the good food they have. Marté has taught Mariam, the oldest girl, to read in the trade language so that she can read the Bible herself.

Philip, with the help of a nephew and a younger son, cultivates more land than most of the neighbors. It is all done by hand. Besides the lack of rain, agriculture is made difficult by chicken hawks, which are a constant threat to baby chicks; monkeys that steal the corn and squirrels that find the peanuts. But worst of all, the staple crop, sorghum, is always attacked by flocks of birds shortly before the grain is ripe.

Marté recently received tragic word from her home village. Her younger brother committed suicide because of fighting with his second wife in a polygamous society. He had still been single when Marté last saw her family. The separation of distance was hard as she struggled through this grief.

Nevertheless, Philip and Marté are excited because they know that only Christ can build a church that brings together people of several ethnic groups and makes them one. Philip says, "When I first moved to this area I thought God would build his church with Bobo people. We would worship in the Bobo language. But now we don't even sing Bobo songs in the church anymore. Our worship is in a common trade language because God is bringing people of various ethnic groups to us."

Africa's natural beauty and beautiful kaleidoscope of cultures often contrast sharply with the people's poverty.



Three different ethnic groups have joined the fellowship of this Bobo family—Senefou, Mossi and Toussian. There is also an interested Siamou person. The little congregation receives regular visits and counsel from missionaries of the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission living at Orodara.

Philip knows there is better land elsewhere. He is often tempted to move on to an easier place, but he feels God has called him to this specific area to be a witness to the many "unreached tribes." For Philip and Marté their Christian commitment includes, "As you go, make disciples. . . ."

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Risky business

Calvin Redekop

One of the most time-honored ways of achieving financial success from zero is to buy real estate. Real estate is one of the few, if not only, commodities for which you can use the value of the purchase itself as collateral for the transaction. The flurry of leveraged, corporate buy outs is approaching the same idea, and there is increasing talk of controlling or restricting it.

Many people who have started from nothing and have "made it" have used the leverage technique of real estate procedures. Of course, good timing, luck and other variables also play a part. During my real estate phase from 1971 to 1974, three friends and I incorporated a real estate company and did well until the recession of 1975. Occupancy went down to 55 percent in our rentals, and soon most of us found other activities more interesting, especially when we saw our paper worth of six digits slowly dwindle toward zero.

When you leverage to buy, you are dependent on the behavior of the economic conditions. I also learned that you need lots of reserves to carry you if you are in a fluctuating market. This insight may have considerable relevance for many who are now in business, whether it be sales, manufacturing, service or farming.

In a dynamic or volatile economy, there are two ways of coping: (1) Have a large capital reserve for the fluctuations. (2) Have a large worth to debt radio structure; in other words, have an operation running basically on equity financing. This can be illustrated by two types of operators.

Type one is illustrated by the farmer, whether he or she has a small, medium or large farm, whose business is paid for in full either through an inheritance or otherwise. She or he has no debts. One such friend told me several years ago, "I couldn't be better fixed. If I lose money this year on my wheat (he lives in Kansas), I'll close down the operation and go into MCC until the price improves."

Type two is illustrated by the farmer who is probably more efficient and hardworking than the farmer mentioned above. She or he may have inherited the farm, but through various business decisions, such as the assumption of debt to finance expansion, has experienced the demise of his or her business.

Each business and farm situation is unique, and there are many other contingencies that influence each case. But the basic principle is still operative. We all know families in each camp. Much hard work, good intentions, integrity and God's blessings are still not enough to build a strong business or farming operation.

Those who were fortunate by design or luck to have mainly equity financing or a large capital operating reserve (which probably amounts to the same thing) are fun to be with and almost make one happy about the "American economic way." But when I am with those who are in deep trouble or losing their business, I silently curse the "Amway."

What is the Christian response to the problem? Or do we simply accept the economic system as a fact of life? Some months back in *The Mennonite* (Nov. 8, 1985, issue) I suggested that the Christian cannot take the same position on borrowing and credit as the non-Christian capitalist because of the ethical problems involved. I suggested that borrowing money makes us the servants of another master, which can compromise our intentions.

A Christian orientation toward credit might alleviate a lot of our hardships. Maximizing the equity financing of business or farming, and minimizing the debt financing really assumes a philosophy that runs counter to the prevailing ethos which says, "Borrow all you can, use other people's money and go as deep as you can, for with luck and hard work you will succeed and get rich." This is exciting stuff for the totally assimilated "acquisitive American" but not for the Christian. Some might even call this acquisitiveness greed.

I recently visited a friend who had done well in business, but just before the recession of 1980 he read Milo Kaufman's *A Challenge of Christian Stewardship*. He made a remarkable decision. "I will level off, consolidate my business and give more time to the church." He came through the recession in great shape and has been quietly helping others who, going full speed ahead, got caught.

I am not saying Christians should not borrow heavily—although it is fraught with problems—but I am saying that the motivation for debt financing needs to be squared with our Christian vocation. If our motives are clear and if we then get caught in an economic disaster, we could, along with Job, say, "Though he kill me, I will still love him." This is not lofty advice from the ivory tower. My family, along with some others in this area, borrowed considerable money to finance a solar company. The company, due partly to the oil glut of 1982, went bankrupt, and the families are now paying off the obligations.

If I ever again start out on a business venture, I will have enough reserve on hand to carry the operating losses for the first three years. I will also have no borrowed capital to establish the business. Are there any interested potential partners out there?

Calvin Redekop is professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

The Stock Exchange symbolizes for many what a nation's business is like. Cal Redekop reminds us that these are volatile times in most businesses.

MEDITATION

Parent love

If I speak to my children as a model parent should, but no love comes through my voice, I become no better than the worst parent. If I have the gift to see the future of my family and hold in my mind not only all knowledge of parenthood and communication but all that is known about families and if I have absolute faith in myself as a parent but have no love for my children, it all amounts to nothing. If I give up everything and live my whole life for my children, yes, even if I go to every parenting class I can but do it without love, I achieve nothing.

This love of which I speak does not lose patience with a child, it looks for constructive ways to help. It is not possessive but helps the child on the road to independence. It is not anxious to impress others with its model parenting nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance.

Love treats a child with respect and does not use its power to hold the child to itself but knows when to let a child go. It is not put out by others' opinions of themselves. It does not keep track of the child's mistakes or gloat over the inadequacies of other parents. Instead it shares the joys of parenthood and children with others who know how important God and love are in their families. Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope, it can outlast anything. Love never fails.

Adaptation of 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 by Marie Schmidt

Love: a noun or a verb?

When most of us think of long-term caring, we cannot help but wonder, Is it really possible to love someone till death do us part.

Perhaps this question stems from a misunderstanding of Christian love. We all look at 1 Corinthians 13 as the epitome of perfect love. We fail to realize that its orientation toward love is wholly different from that of the world. For while the world speaks of love as a noun, a feeling, 1 Corinthians speaks of love as a verb, an act. The ramifications are enormous. One bases its action on ever-changing feelings, the other acts consistently, believing the feelings of love will follow.

The text does not pretend that love, let alone lifetime commitment, will always prove a lovely experience. On the contrary, it portrays love at its worst, when the relationship is strained and those involved need reminding that love is patient and kind, not jealous and boastful. Had the relationship's worth been solely based on whether the parties were "in love," little hope would remain. This kind of relationship, created to find love instead of give it, usually ends in disappointment.

Most of us would have to agree that what we value most in our immediate family is the ability to relax in its love. We don't have to keep on our toes round the clock lest we commit the unforgivable sin. We're loved—regardless.

Having left the family's home, most eventually seek the comfort and security of knowing that another will love us for the rest of our lives through thick and thin, good times and bad. Though feelings may fluctuate, love alone bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Bill Archibald

CONTENTS

All human beings are in some way connected to other people. This is a social reality and a theological truth.

The connections that bind us together are varied. Some are thick as blood; others are thin as a flippant promise.

In the Bible our connectedness expresses itself in family. It is the divine purpose of our being to belong to God and to other people as a fulfillment of our created potential. Through Jesus Christ the meaning of family is raised to its highest plane; in him we all become brothers and sisters.

Family living is covenant living. It is never easy, and today's challenges are only variations of previous challenges. This issue attempts to promote the positive values of Christian family life.

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THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, OH 45817; Pacific District, Carol Peterson, 25956 S. Rhoten Road, Aurora, OR 97002; Western District, Debbie Huxman, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; Window to Mission, Lois Deckert, 122 W. Dayton Yellow Springs Road, Apt. #4, Fairborn, OH 45324; and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Richard A. Kauffman, 3003 Benham Ave. Elkhart, IN 46517.

EDITORIAL

What is family?

T. S. Eliot (d. 1965) wrote at one point, "What have we if we have not life together?" Human life in the Bible is life together. Life has value in relationships—with God and with other people.

Togetherness—relationships that are mutually creative and mutually dignifying—that's what families are about.

There is much pain in today's families as separation, divorce, runaway children, alienation and other tragedies take their toll. So much so that many people wonder if the institution of family can survive.

From the biblical teaching and from what I observe in past history as well as today, the family as institution will be around as long as people are around. The meaning of family is essential to being human.

But it may be that in its expression family is being resculptured. The basic clay of family will remain; its molding probably needs some reshaping.

Robert Couchman, executive director of Metro Toronto Family Services, recently said, "A true family consists of two or more people who care unconditionally for one another and share in the collective health and security of the unit as well as in supporting and helping each member to secure his or her full potential and achieve personal fulfillment." That may be the 1986 version of, "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

There are changes in traditional husband/wife, male/female roles in families. But there are common factors—the same clay—always meant to be there, which are fundamental to all families. And these are plus factors for all members in families.

Acceptance, regardless of being first or last in school, regardless of failure in career hopes, is one key foundation stone for building creative families. Not a wishy-washy, no-expectations acceptance, but a feeling of being loved and valued each for his or her being, is a recognition that God created each person uniquely in his image.

Belonging—a sense of membership with loyal partners in a unit—makes you feel like you count. It builds worth for the unit and the individual.

Boundaries are essential between parents and children. Parents can sometimes be friends to children, but their friends cannot be parents. It's a plus when children know parents are willing to risk being parents.

Chatter across the generations helps us feel connected; it gives families a history. Instead of seeing the "good old days" as a way to hold back and therefore discourage reflections, our history becomes the bridge and stepping-stone to a continuing future with realistic foundations.

Entry to new people is a beautiful quality when children bring friends home or when dating begins. The welcome mat for strangers or newcomers is a biblical quality that often gets tested in a pluralistic world. Hospitality means that we may host angels without our knowing it.

Intimacy or feeling close to one another is a plus that covers a large range of needs: giving and receiving emotional support, doing things together, feeling and expressing affection, handling our sexuality. When not expressed creatively, this need leads to abuse and violence.

Limitations with constructive reasons help us to learn accountability and understand discipline. Too much control or ultimatums can have disastrous consequences because they often lead to rebellion.

Positive family feuding encourages members to express their unique selves and add the dimensions of the whole family to its makeup. Healthy debates and competitions enrich the quality of family living.

Privacy or special times just to be oneself show respect for individuals. While too much independent individualism destroys family togetherness, each person needs to do some things without interference. All people need to feel OK about some secrets.

Shared family work and other responsibilities. Too long and too often such divisions have been based strictly on sex stereotypes. To enjoy the benefits of each person's aptitudes and to share drudgeries is the best chance for positive results.

Family can be positive. One formula says, add together our efforts, subtract our selfish interests, divide the tasks, multiply our resources, and family life can be a plus for all of us. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

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We believe in the second coming of Jesus

Foundations for our faith—8

Thomas Finger

The images associated with Christ's return are among the most vivid in the Bible. Bodies rise from graves and sail on clouds, angels fly about with trumpets, bowls and scrolls. Because such events seem so unlike anything that we experience today, some Christians—especially those who regard themselves as educated, sophisticated or scientific—do not interpret Jesus' return in any historical sense. They suppose that if such biblical images have any meaning at all, it must be a spiritual one. (For example, "Christ's return" might merely mean that God returns to each of us each time we pray.)

Some people long for the king but forget the kingdom.

Other themes associated with Jesus' future coming, however, strike deep chords of hope in all human hearts. We hear of evil being destroyed, of suffering and death being done away, of a world where young and old, rich and poor from all nations live in harmony and joy. But because they long for this and regard it as central to the gospel, some other Christians interpret all the images associated with Jesus' return in a historical way. They try to fit every beast, battle and bowl into a single chronological scheme.

If we as a larger church are to derive common hope and comfort from the anticipation of Christ's return, it is important to avoid both of these extremes. If we wholly spiritualize it, we risk losing all connection between Jesus and the future of the world where we live. And having spiritualized this theme, we may forget it. Yet if we become overly concerned about the historical details involved, we may lose sight of this event's deeper meaning. And having focused on these details, we may find ourselves thinking (and perhaps arguing) about little else.

If we steer between these extremes, perhaps we can make four significant affirmations about the return of Jesus Christ. Although many people (including myself) could say more, perhaps most of us could affirm at least the following:

1. Our personal hope is intertwined with the future of our historical world. For some people, the goal of Christian life consists in meeting with Jesus when they die. Valid as this hope is, it is incomplete. We might say that though such people long for the king, they may tend to forget his kingdom. According to the Bible, Christ is presently involved in our world. Christ is guiding his people, subduing his enemies and preparing people from all nations for the final victory of his kingdom.

Consequently, even when individuals die and enter Christ's presence, their joy cannot, in the fullest sense, be complete. For although they may begin resting from their labors, Jesus will not yet be resting from his. As long as suffering, sorrow or death exist, Jesus will be striving to release the entire created order from them. If Christ's *return* to our world, and not merely our individual exit from it, be our ultimate hope, then our goal must be Christ's goal. Throughout our lives we will look forward to the day when not only we but the whole world will be released from suffering. We will rejoice in anticipating the day when not only we but the entire universe will attain the purpose for which it was created.

2. Our hope calls us to involvement in this world. If Jesus will return to our historical world, there will be some continuity between what he is currently doing and what he will finally do. Whatever we may now do in his name to alleviate suffering, to pursue justice or to act out of servant-like love will not be irrelevant when God is finally all in all. Christ's present struggle against evil and his final elimination of it are part of the same overarching historical activity. Accordingly, authentic hope for Jesus' return does not make one less concerned about our world. On the contrary, it arouses courage and motivates involvement. It assures us that no matter how threatening or irredeemable any form of evil may seem, it cannot ultimately prevail against God's love in Christ (Romans 8:35-39, 1 Corinthians 15:58).

3. Our ultimate hope is for Jesus himself. Some people notice that Christ's return is connected with the overcoming of suffering and the establishment of justice. They doubt, however, that Jesus will actually reappear or that dead bodies will actually rise. Accordingly, they suppose that all the images associated with Christ's return

are merely symbols for some general social vision. Such people may throw themselves into admirable work for justice or peace. However, although such people long for the kingdom, they may tend to forget the king. Yet if our hope be for *Christ's* return, then no social reform or revolution, no matter how far-reaching, can exhaust it. For our ultimate hope is not only that people will know and love each other but that all people will fully know and love—and be known and be loved by—God. Hope for Christ's return is the hope that God himself will come among us; that we shall see him fully, as he truly is (1 Corinthians 13:12, 1 John 3:2-3); that "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).

4. We must commit the future into God's hands. If we can hope both that Jesus will someday be personally present and that his presence will transform our present historical world, then we all must be humble in facing the future. Some find it difficult to conceive of events that might contradict what we think of as physical or social laws. Yet if Jesus will be personally present in a world without injustice or suffering, some unusual events will have to occur to make this possible. Although the future world will be continuous with our world, there also will be significant discontinuity between them.

On the other hand, careful study of the Bible soon shows how impossible it is to know exactly how all this will occur. How, for instance, will everyone on a round earth see Jesus descend from the heavens (Revelation 1:7)? Or how shall we visualize Christ smiting the nations with a sword issuing from his mouth (Revelation 19:15)? Even those most concerned with end-time chronology acknowledge that at some point one cannot press details too far and that not every image can be literally understood. Christians can respectfully disagree as to where to draw the line between what we can and cannot know. But surely everyone must humbly acknowledge that such a line must be drawn.

Summary. Hope for the return of Jesus Christ is a practical doctrine. It gives us courage and joy to act in the present. For if Christ is returning to this historical world, he has not abandoned it to oppression, suffering and death. If it is Christ who is returning, then everything truly done in his name must surely bear fruit. And whether we now experience these fruits or not, we can be certain that we, along with the whole creation, will someday rejoice in his presence.

Yet such a future is so different from the present that neither social ideologies nor eschatological charts can tell us exactly how it will come about. We cannot reshape society or history as a whole so that Christ will return more swiftly. Our calling is simply to live according to Jesus' way of servanthood, peace and justice wherever we are—whether our efforts be met with what humans think of as overwhelming success or abject defeat.

Thomas Finger, 5748 W. Race, Chicago, IL 60644, is a member of First Mennonite Church at Oak Park. Tom is professor of systematic theology at Northern Baptist Seminary. Interested readers can consult a more elaborate treatment on the second coming of Christ in Finger's Christian Theology: an Eschatological Approach, Vol. 1 *(Thomas Nelson, 1985).* •

Saskatoon '86 and the coming kingdom

Donovan E. Smucker

At the moment I started to write this article the doorbell rang. Upon opening the door I met two young women representing the Jehovah's Witnesses. They appeared to be simple, zealous and committed. I purchased a copy of *The Watchtower* for a quarter. I was stunned to read that the average printing of this journal was 11,630,000 in 104 languages.

When I returned to my study I reflected on this brief encounter. The two Witnesses belong (with some variations) with Melchior Hoffman, Jan Matthys and Jan of Leiden at Muenster (1534-36); with Klaus Epp and the Kiva people in Russia; with C. I. Scofield and Lewis Sperry Chafer of our own day. And even with Albert Schweitzer in the sense that he viewed Jesus as consistently and wrongly focused on the apocalyptic kingdom within his lifetime.

This pattern of interpretation places the kingdom essentially in the future. The imminence of the Messianic age, they say, requires us to prepare for the end, view the moral teaching only as an ethic for the brief interim between the first and second comings and then to realize the precarious nature of everything and anything which now exists.

This permits the Christian to defy human authority in government, culture and popular religion. No idols. No flag waving. No flag salutes. But it also suggests no MCC, no service, no hospitals, no schools, no summer camps, no artistic expression. Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Sound the alarm. Don't spend time reading the face of the sky. Discern the signs of the times.

The other extreme developed during the 19th and the early 20th centuries when liberal Protestantism took the parable of the mustard seed to mean that gradual evolutionary growth was bringing the kingdom in step by step. If the Witnesses and the Muensterites had the kingdom too much in the future, this party of optimists proclaimed it too much in the present. Actually, the New Testament affirms a paradox whereby our Lord came preaching at Galilee, saying, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:14-15). *And* 13 chapters later Mark describes in awesome detail the future kingdom.

Mark 1:14-15, however, is a genuine dynamic force in both human history and church history: the bold and audacious Luther at Worms defying a monopoly of a thousand years; Conrad Grebel at Zurich rejecting the later compromise by Luther, Calvin and Zwingli. This new stirring of kingdom-consciousness changed church, state and society.

Always the church was trying to catch up with the kingdom as the treasure of the gospel started to shatter the earthen vessel. Soon the Anabaptist yeast demanded personal decision making. No longer could the prince march the people to the river and force baptism upon them. This yeast led to the modern missionary movement, church renewal with Wesley and Zinzendorf and modern democracy, which affirmed voluntary commitment for Christian and citizen.

Even the finest achievements of the Reformation, even our radical Reformation, could not be viewed as a perfect union of kingdom and church. We knew the Catholics were wrong in making church and kingdom coterminous—as one. It was more painful to discover the kingdom is also pushing, stretching and judging our free-church and low-church claims. But that pushing and stretching by the kingdom is the foundation of the prophetic office.

At the Tenth Assembly of the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita, Kan., the theme was "The Kingdom of God and the Way of Peace." Million Belete of Ethiopia, David Schroeder of Canada, Paul G. Hiebert of India and the United States, Hank B. Kossen of the Netherlands and Albert Widjaja of Indonesia came from different nations to proclaim the power of the kingdom of God. Hank Kossen was bold in seeing the kingdom confronting the principalities and powers, and Albert Widjaja fearlessly examined the claims of the Third World on our consciences. It was a biblical feast to hear these five messages focus on the central biblical teaching of the kingdom.

It is also significant that our Foundation Series for Adults concentrates on *The Coming Kingdom* as the fourth of eight courses of study. The book by Don Blosser is an excellent guide for the development of a kingdom theology

Thy
Kingdom
Come

Saskatoon '86

"Thy Kingdom Come" is the theme for the July 21-27 General Conference sessions at Saskatoon. This conference logo was designed by Gerry Unrau of Saskatoon.

We must deal with the erosion of family foundations. What can today's children expect in the future?

"We now know that all technology is brilliant but fallible and finite."

which emphasizes the hope of the kingdom, love and justice in the kingdom, the paradox of being in the world but not of the world, and the delicate challenge of the two kingdoms. The book ends with a rugged presentation of kingdom living.

Against this background, chastened and humbled, I pray for kingdom insight on some of the following needs for Saskatoon '86 (July 21-27 triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church):

1. The crisis on the family farm is the greatest economic challenge since the drought and depression in the '30s. This is a major upheaval.
2. The shaking of the foundations of family life.
3. The movement from unity within the Mennonite conference to church union between GC and MC.
4. Increasing the unity among the fundamentalists, evangelicals, liberals and Anabaptists who are within our conference.
5. Struggling with the nature of theological education in the Mennonite conferences, especially how Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., can strengthen itself as an international school while relating to other centers of theological education.
6. Seeking insight in our relation to movements for justice that challenge the peace position, the traditional stance of Mennonite Central Committee and the rise of conservatism in U.S. politics.
7. Guidance for those who cannot pay full taxes to the U.S. government with its huge military budget.
8. To examine professionalism as the ultimate commitment of growing numbers of our people.
9. Relating the Mennonite World Conference, the Commission on Overseas Mission and MCC to each other.
10. Learning to make adjustments which permit non-ethnic Mennonites to feel at home in our circles.
11. As our North American Mennonite incomes push toward $3 billion, to ask if our stewardship is at the right place taking into account all the good causes.
12. Develop a consensus on human sexuality.
13. Pray for the avoidance of nuclear holocaust.

I have written this after the chastening experience of the Challenger shuttle tragedy, which blew seven astronauts to bits after 70 seconds in the air. This tragedy is a reminder that the proudest monuments of human pride are never sealed from defeat, failure and catastrophe. We now know that all technology is brilliant but fallible and finite.

The kingdom treasure has broken through our earthen vessels time after time. It is sign and symbol of Almighty God's promise to fully consummate his purposes. We have much to be grateful for in our past history. We need not go to Muenster, Kiva or Dallas to say, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." •

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

On conversion

Ivan J. Kauffman

"All of the values we are promoting in this letter rest ultimately on the disarmament of the human heart and the conversion of the human spirit to God, who alone can give authentic peace" *(from the Bishops' Pastoral Letter, "The Challenge of Peace").*

Paul, who became the church's greatest missionary, began his career by trying to destroy the church. He was on his way to Damascus to arrest and probably execute the leaders of the church there when he was knocked down by a blinding light, and spoken to by the voice of the risen Christ. That event changed the course of history.

A few years ago I happened to hear a woman who is a recovering alcoholic and a member of AA read the Scripture in worship. It was the conversion story from Acts 9. Her obvious sense of having had a similar experience struck me deeply. It was a reminder that conversion does not just happen to saints.

Leo Tolstoy, the great Russian writer, described his conversion this way: "Five years ago I came to believe in Christ's teaching, and my life suddenly changed. . . . It happened to me as it happens to a man who goes out on some business and on the way suddenly decides that the business is unnecessary and returns home."

The hymn "Amazing Grace" is the true story of such a dramatic reversal. The author, John Newton, was an English ship captain who bought slaves in Africa and sold them in America. In 1749 he brought a shipload of slaves to Charleston, S.C. As was customary, he tortured the men en route and raped the women. Even among sailors he was known for his anti-religious statements.

But during a storm, when he thought his ship was doomed, he experienced grace in a profound way and his life was transformed. He became one of the leading evangelists in England, was ordained a priest in the Anglican Church and played a leading role in bringing about the abolition of the slave trade by the British Parliament in the early 1800s.

For most of us conversion is more ordinary. Dag Hammarskjold, the former Secretary General of the UN, described his conversion: "I don't know Who—or what—put the question, I don't know when it was put. I don't even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer *Yes* to Someone—or Something—and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that therefore, my life, in self-surrender, had a goal."

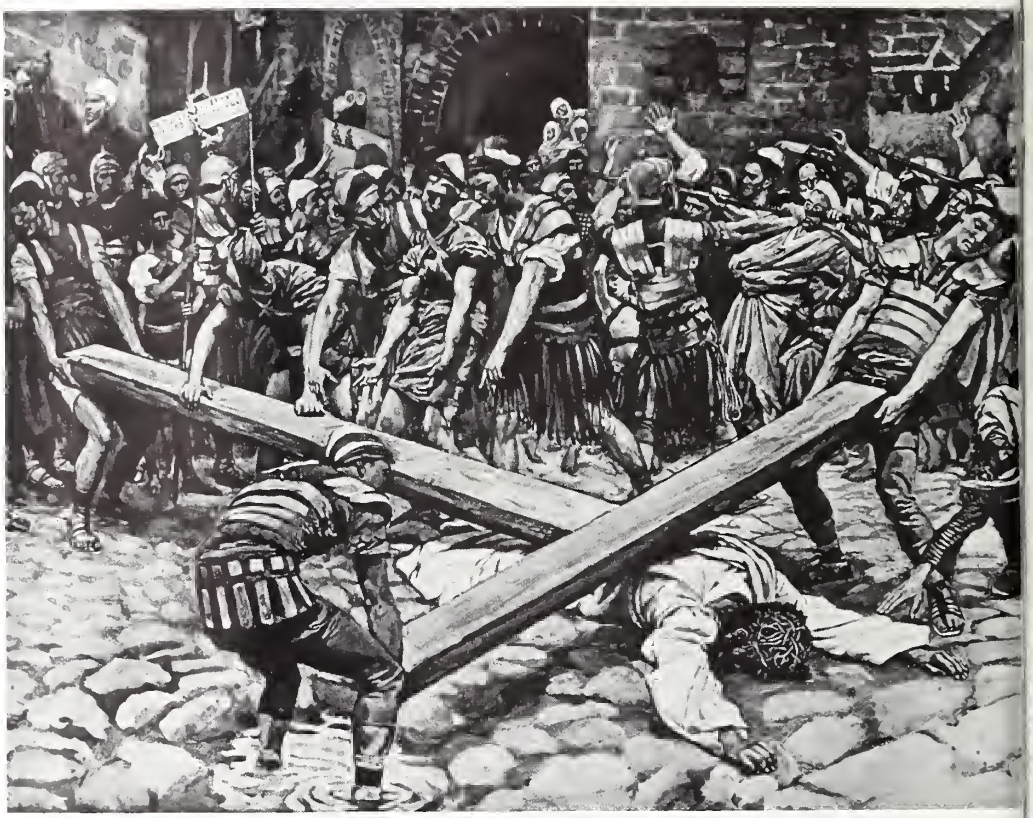
Ordinary conversions may be less dramatic than Paul's but, to the people involved, they're as great a change in direction. Conversion always means turning from selfishness to love, from fantasy to reality, from seeing life as merely physical to seeing it as both spiritual and physical. It means moving from isolation into community—and acting accordingly.

"Peace becomes possible only when we have a conversion of spirit. We cannot have peace with hate in our hearts," says the bishops' peace pastoral. "It is meaningless to seek to transform structures if the hearts of people are not changed," the economics pastoral says.

Utopian schemes that proclaim noble and worthy goals are regularly unveiled in our society and just as regularly fail. They fail because they try to change what people do without changing what they think and feel. We can fake it for a while, but eventually we always end up doing what we feel like, and unless that can be changed the situation is hopeless.

Only conversion really changes the world, because it involves individual people being changed at the level of spirit. That's not an easy process, and it costs a lot—everything to be exact—but it is possible. Every church and every history book is full of examples. What happened to Paul can happen to all people—and that's good news.

Ivan J. Kauffman, 140 Tennessee Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20002, writes a weekly religious column.



James Tissot painted this portrayal of "Simon of Cyrene compelled to bear the cross."

But it happened (Lamentations 4)

Monty Ledford

After the high point of chapter 3, where the innocent sufferer breaks through to hope, we return in chapter 4 to a fairly straightforward series of descriptions of the siege and fall of Jerusalem, written while the scenes are still fresh in the writer's mind.

This post-fall description leads me to think that this book was not written by Jeremiah, who was compelled to flee to Egypt by the fearful survivors of Governor Gedaliah's assassination. Jeremiah was not around to behold the scenes of chapters 4 and 5. The author was one of the few who took Jeremiah's message to heart and speaks with the same concerns.

Chapter 4, with its eyewitness view of siege and aftermath, gives the lie to all heroic or romanticized views of war. For all the high-sounding things war is supposed to preserve, in actuality it does its best job destroying all that is worthwhile. As always, the infants and children suffer most (v. 4), crying for food that no one has to give them; the children of the wealthy suffer terribly (v. 5), not being streetwise or used to privation. In war or any massive social dislocation, this would be the category most of our children would fall into.

The blackened skin of once fair and ruddy princes (vv. 7, 8) reminds me of Edward R. Murrow's experience in a concentration camp shortly after World War II. A thin and horrible figure came up to him and said, "Mr. Murrow, Mr. Murrow. Don't you recognize me?" Murrow did not. "I am the mayor of Prague you once interviewed." Even Sodom, paradigm of wickedness, was destroyed in a moment of time; Jerusalem's suffering goes on for months, years. If God's punishment fits the crime, what does this say of Jerusalem's sin? Jerusalem, site of the temple, guardian of the Law, suffers more because Jerusalem was accountable for more. Those who regularly contrast our Christian heritage with Russia's atheist brutality miss this point completely. It is precisely our Christian heritage which makes our sin greater and undercuts any claim to moral superiority. "From him to whom much is given much is required."

Those who die a lingering starvation almost envy those who died in the fury of battle (v. 9). Our dreadful paraphrase is, The only thing worse than dying in a nuclear attack would be surviving a nuclear attack. I hope that if the United States goes into nuclear war in our generation, my family and I will perish in the first attack. But may God spare us. Let us plead with God that he will mercifully restrain our murderous madness. The ultimate horror, forever fixed in the poet's mind, is the cannibalism he witnessed in those final terrible days (v. 10). None of us really knows the extremes we are capable of going to in terrible physical need. Once again, may God spare us this.

And all this ascribed to the fierce anger of God (v. 11). His wrath is complete (11a), overwhelming (11b), savage and irreversible (11c, d—He "kindles a fire" which destroys the very foundations). If I come across in these articles as an advocate of God's wrath, it is not because I find it attractive but because I find it in Scripture. I know that I and all smug Fundamentalists like me need his mercy as much as anybody.

The final days of siege are described in four scenes in vv. 17-20. The daily disappointment of no sign of their Egyptian allies (v. 17), the house-to-house fighting (v. 18), the unsuccessful retreat of the exhausted army (v. 19) and the incredible shame of the king's capture, in spite of all the promises of God ("We thought that under his shadow we would live among the nations"). The burning memory of Edom's attack when Israel was in defeat evokes another cry for vengeance (vv. 21, 22).

"O Daughter of Zion, your punishment will end." Yes, the nation will be restored, but what good does that do for these people? I don't know about you, but this history and all of history seems to me to be meaningless if there is no personal resurrection and afterlife. The experience of the people of God simply cries out for it. *Fifth in a series on Lamentations*

Monty Ledford, 11 Dean N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505, is pastor at the North Park Mennonite Church.

"Let us plead with God that he will mercifully restrain our murderous madness."

WE
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MARINES
12

Sunday inconvenience could be good

Wally Goossen

Sunday shopping will be a controversy for some time. Many will remind us of the hypocrisy of people who oppose it and then go to restaurants, variety stores and other businesses on Sundays.

Sunday shopping is apparently a human right and a necessity. Those who want Sunday as a day of worship and relaxation must not interfere with their human rights.

The question is a religious one, not a legal one. Sunday exists first of all because it is a religious day. But Jesus also said Sabbath is made for people, not people for the Sabbath. He cites David, who fed his battle-weary men with showbread that legally belonged to the priests as a symbol and as provision for their own diet.

God puts the needs of human beings ahead of symbols. The priests no doubt had plenty of provisions. David and his men didn't. Had David made a habit of doing this, God would have prevented him and would have chastised him.

Likewise many jobs today are forced on us by need. Hospitals, seniors' homes and huge steel mills cannot be shut down at any time if they are to function at all. They perform vital functions. God is a realist, not a legalist or theorist or theologian. Grace and the practical needs of people are always provided for when he gives commandments. This is what befuddled the Pharisees when Jesus always escaped their legalistic traps based on their misunderstanding of their own law and its purpose.

The crux of the question comes when we try to do away with his commandments, such as observance of a day of rest when we worship him. That results from a society becoming godless. But his commandments are for all of humanity because he asks all of humanity to live by his rules, to believe.

When a society has become as irreverent as ours, the worldly become more powerful and have their way. Their motive is not need but greed. They fantasize that longer shopping hours will create more buying power. It will do no more than give more time for the spending of the same amount of money, create more overhead and bankrupt many.

CALL
FORWARD
AFT
PILOT
MID
RESET

The occasional interruption in our routine might be a blessing from God.

Criticism of the Christian faith and church is becoming rampant in our society. Media people wouldn't dare say about some other religious groups what they say about us. Sunday shopping is only part of a trend toward moral and spiritual corruption.

As for convenience stores and the like, yes, we use them. This illustrates how difficult it is to not be affected by the society of which we are a part. As Mennonites we have significant experience in this. We must help shape society. The answer is not more Sunday business to be consistent. We don't have to have convenience stores and restaurants open on Sundays. If they are closed I won't object.

But a question like this that affects all of society cannot be decided just on self-interest. And so a day of rest and peace has become reason for conflict.

The majority of our legislators have no idea what the Sabbath is about, but they make the laws for Christians and everyone else. We mistake convenience for need too often. Some inconvenience to acknowledge God would do our society a great deal of good.

Wally Goossen, 16 Helen St., Apt. 106, Dundas, ON L9H 1N4, is a free-lance writer.

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Worship

Margaret Lorraine Hudson

Meditation means to . . .
stretch
To encompass
all one can hold
of life's infinite potential—

celebrate
The wonder
the mystery
the joy of life—

reach out
To encircle
all humankind
in love
in understanding
in healing
in reconciliation—

Fixing and preaching

Walter Paetkau

As part of our Olivet Church's Missions Weekend we held a breakfast session at a local restaurant. Wayne Friesen, a missionary with the Northern Canada Evangelical Mission, was sitting across from me. We had invited him, as one of our own, to spend the weekend with us.

"How are things?" I asked.

"Oh, I fix cars and patch knees," he said.

"Now why would you do that?" I queried.

"Well, there's no mechanic around and I know how to fix things. It's a good way to maintain contact with my Native friends. Some stop in for bandaging and other first aid. We like it up there."

"Up there" is Halfway. That's the name of their area, about 80 miles northwest of Fort St. John, B.C. It's a ranching area. About a dozen white ranchers are settled in the Athabascan Indian reserve area. Wayne, his wife, Chris, and their two boys, Josh and Matt, are the first resident missionaries at Halfway. The Catholic priest is about 70 miles distant, and other groups stop in only periodically.

Besides fixing cars and bandaging, Wayne also does a lot of carpentry. He built their own small, comfortable house. While building it, the family lived in a 9 x 12 tent, using a small trailer for their cooking needs. Those were the cool, frosty months of August to November of 1983. Living in a tent, building their house, and other down-to-earth incidents gained them the confidence of the Indians.

One day the family was asked to accompany some hunters to retrieve a moose. At the killing site the moose was cut up, and a special meal of some of the entrails was prepared and offered to the Friesens. Eating it endeared the family to the Natives.

The Friesens have been there over two years and plan to stay as long as the Lord wills it.

"Tell me, Wayne," I asked, "How do you share the gospel?"

"Well," he reflected, "in many ways. Sometimes I'm asked questions on the trail and we talk about Jesus. Sometimes we talk when we're fixing things or when people stop at the house. We're always getting visitors. We have Bible studies and on occasion preaching sessions. Up to 100 come out. I officiate at weddings and sometimes at funerals."

"What about Chris? What does she do?"

"She's our cowgirl. She loves horses. She has one and the boys have one. She rides with the women. One woman wanted a Bible study while they were riding. Chris also tans moosehides with them, picks berries and helps with the weddings and other community functions."

"What do the boys do?" I continued.

"They're 9 and 10. They like playing with the Indian kids. They have rabbits, a goat and a dog as well as their horse. They also help host visitors that come to our house. We have a video set donated by Olivet. People like to watch."

Good as all this sounds, there are a lot of hardships. Isolation is one. Lack of the usual amenities is another. Opposition from various sources is also troubling. Wayne has received threats on his life for the inroads the Spirit of Jesus is making in the lives of the people. In some ways the opposition is reminiscent of the resistance the Early Church faced.

Response to the gospel is not always consistent. Six people accepted the Lord during the first year but within the year returned to their ancestral ways. Slowly, however, through an emphasis on discipleship, they are returning to the faith.

"What made you decide on this ministry?" I inquired.

"It goes back a long way," Wayne reminisced. "I'm a product of Olivet. I was there when the church was organized 25 years ago. I was a kid then and, like others, rebelled and drifted from the Lord. I became a helicopter mechanic and flew into Cross Lake, Man., where I had my first experience with the Native Indians. Later, through the encouragement of friends, I became a Christian. Then D. P. Neufeld urged me to go into Native ministry work. I went to school, and one thing led to another. We've served five years now."

"What about your folks?" I knew about his father's long illness.

Wayne thought a bit about this. "I believe God worked everything for good. Wee mom—she's four-foot-six—near raised us. Both really backed us in prayer."

"One more thing, Wayne. Tell me truthfully, does Chris like it up north?"

A twinkle lit his eyes. "She was pretty young when we got married. But we'd hardly got into the field and she was drying bear meat, picking mushrooms—barefoot and pregnant. Yes, she's right in there, ministering."

The coffee cup was drained, and time called for other commitments. My heart and prayers went out to Wayne, Chris, the kids and their work. The Good News is finding response in the North through them.

Walter Paetkau, 2364 Cascade St., Clearbrook, BC V2T 3G3, is chairman of the Olivet congregation.

The Good News gets communicated in lots of ways.

Care at for-profit hospitals costs more than at non-profit facilities, and medical care at for-profit hospitals is "inferior to that in the non-profits," according to a report released March 23 by the (U.S.) National Council of Senior Citizens. The council also charged that the government has been subsidizing for-profit hospitals at the expense of non-profits, using bookkeeping rules and Medicare payment provisions to funnel money to the for-profit hospitals.

Wendy Bergren, who died after a four-year struggle against cancer, heard people ask, "What can I do to help?" She offered some sample answers (from *Salt* magazine): "If you cook a dinner for my family, offer a choice of two courses. (Once we had tuna casserole four nights in a row!) . . . Help my children attend birthday parties by bringing a wrapped birthday gift for future use. . . . Take snapshots of my children. This gives me a feeling that there are permanent records of happenings I must miss. . . . Pray for me and say so. The fact that you have faith gives me faith. . . . Allow me to feel sad."

NEWS

Budget excess goes to Chicago school

Good news outweighs bad at CDC sessions

Washington, Ill.—The 30th annual sessions of the Central District Conference were held here April 3-6 at Calvary Mennonite Church. Excellent attendance (205 delegates, 99 visitors and 116 children), inspirational challenges by LeRoy Friesen, enthusiastic singing led by Cynthia Neufeld, recognition of a minister ordained 70 years ago, tough resolutions on peace and justice, and a budget met for the first time since 1981 all marked the sessions.

When Howard Baumgartner, district conference president-elect, read the final credentials report, he noted a total registration of 420. The large number of children (including youth) made the hosts scramble for some extra volunteers at times. The 1986 total compared with 308 (31 children) in last year's conference at Wayland, Iowa.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries professor of peace studies LeRoy Friesen gave three addresses on the conference theme, "Recognizing the Good News."

CDC conference minister Mark Weidner presents a plaque to R. L. Hartzler in recognition of 70 years since his ordination.

Friesen gripped the audience from the outset by sharing that his 43-year-old brother had died very suddenly of a cardiac condition that LeRoy himself also has. This generates personal anxiety and fear, he said, and makes him think of all the fears people live with. "Fear is bad news," said Friesen, "but the gospel is good news." This good news is often hard to recognize in the world of the bomb, unemployment and farm crises, but it flowers in the New Testament Gospels and is fertilized by the epistles. A dominant theme in the New Testament is, "Fear not." Friesen challenged people to "savor, celebrate and dance the gift of life" because the darkness of fear cannot put out the light of hope, justice, forgiveness and goodness.

In his second address, LeRoy spoke of the Good News "in our congregations." The theme was again developed around the "bad news/good news" pattern. The bad news is that there are many "aliens . . . strangers" among us. To all comes the good news that God, like the waiting father of Luke 15, "welcomes" alienated people. God's vision for the church is that salvation is personal *and* corporate, creating a people . . . a family. Not only do strangers need the church, but the church also needs "strangers" for its own spiritual growth.

In yet another hostage situation the Chicago police have proved that nonviolence is more successful than violence, according to the National Coalition on Television Violence. John L. Pasch had killed his landlord, a police officer and two dogs. The police strategy was to evacuate people in danger of being shot by Pasch. "Wait. If necessary, we'll be here next week," said Chicago Police Superintendent Fred Rice. Rice said that over the past few years the police have had 95 similar situations and have been able to resolve every one without anyone getting hurt. The average Chicago police officer fires his gun once every 27 years.

A worker at the Mennonite Central Committee appropriate technology center in Guatemala was recently forcibly recruited by Guatemalan Army troops in civilian clothes. He was released after two days, since he was only 17 years old, too young to be abducted by the army. MCC country representative Henry Yoder helped obtain his release from the military barracks. Yoder said, "There were more than 100 people waiting who were denied entrance" to the barracks.

An estimated 330,000 Christians are martyred each year worldwide, according to a report by David B. Barrett in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research.* Martyrdom is defined as "losing one's life for Christ as a result of human hostility." Says Barrett, "Martyrdom continues to play a major role in local, national, regional, continental and global evangelization. . . . 'Evangelism is the most dangerous business.' "

Friesen's closing "bad news/good news" address focused on the world. Taking a quick glimpse at global disparities, at youth depression and at "a quality of life measured by the GNP," Friesen cited John 3:16 and asked, "Where is God's love in the world?" To illustrate the good news of John 3:16, he pointed to the unity of God's creation. God loves the whole cosmos and desires material and spiritual to be one. God embraces all of creation to the point of hurt ("gave his only begotten son"). Therein is good news even today for all people. It is God's nature to save no matter what the cost. That is also a challenge to all believers.

Singing was from *Assembly Songs* and the *Mennonite Hymnal.* Cynthia Neufeld, with varying accompaniment and sometimes a cappella, led the conference in making music that filled the building.

Raymond L. Hartzler, now 92, was recognized upon the 70th anniversary of his ordination (April 2, 1916). "R. L.," as he is affectionately known in the district, responded with a call to "wise" living for Christ in today's world. He said the churches must exercise more deliberate and prophetic discernment of God's will without falling into the trap of "easy" answers.

Mennonite conferences are often filled with seriousness. This year's Central District sessions were punctuated with good humor. The conference theme, "Recognizing the Good News," was illustrated by a *Good News Review.* It showed a couple, in pajamas, reading their morning paper, all about the district programs. This began a series of creative reports. Camp Friedenswald called its report *67 Minutes* and creatively used that format. The youth workers used a "hotline" skit.

Steve Ropp, one of the CDC's youth ministers, listens to "hotline" west as Jerry Nussbaum talks to him from hotline east.

Resolutions passed by the delegates included (1) a proposal for MILE—Mennonites of Illinois Leadership Education—a cooperative project (Mennonite Church, Illinois Conference, Central District Conference, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and Chicago Area Mennonites) for conference-based theological education; (2) approval of another three-year appointment for Mark Weidner as conference minister serving three-fourths time; (3) opposition to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars) and support for resisters; (4) opposition to U.S. aid to contras in Nicaragua; (5) proposal of an East Central States Inter-Mennonite Council; (6) appreciation to Bernie Wiebe for 10 years as editor of *The Mennonite*; (7) a 1986 budget asking of $34.50 per member.

A resolution on abortion drafted at the conference had to be tabled. Several delegates felt it was done too hastily and without relating to the General Conference statement.

Willis Sommer, Central District treasurer, reported a 1985 net surplus of over $4,000. As a consequence, he handed a check for $2,000 to the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center. A decision made at the 1985 conference included the condition that the school would get this if income exceeded the budget. *Bernie Wiebe*

Crossroads

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(316) 283-5100.

MVS is a project of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Twenty-four Hungarian Roman Catholic priests recently told their government they would not respond to any call for military service, according to Ecumenical Press Service. The priests said they had written to the defense ministry to "align ourselves with non-violent principles, which are the only way to peace."

West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., will celebrate its 50th anniversary July 11-13. The weekend theme is "Magnify the Lord" or "Hailig Dem Herrn." Plans include a Friday evening banquet, a Saturday morning breakfast, a Saturday afternoon Sunday school picnic, a Saturday evening Jugendverein and reminiscing, a Sunday morning worship, a Sunday noon lunch and a Sunday evening closing program of a choir cantata, mass choir, testimonials and a message.

The Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the Commission on Home Ministries continue to arrange for translations of Anabaptist literature into Chinese, having already made available *This We Believe* by James Waltner, *The Anabaptist Tradition* by Myron Augsburger, *Who Are the Mennonites?* (brochure), *The Church's Witness to the World* by Sheldon Sawatzky and *Guide to Faith* and *Biblical Way of Peace*, both by Helmut Harder. In process are *The Politics of Jesus* by John Howard Yoder and *How Mennonites Came to Be, What Mennonites Believe* and *A Faith to Live By*, all by J. C. Wenger.

Catholic activist turns Mennonite ideas around

LaGrange, Ill. (GCMC)—Here's the answer: Send young people, ages 14 to 18, as evangelists to youth in other churches and schools. The question? How can we teach the meaning of peace to our young people?

Forty Mennonite youth leaders and peace workers came to Chicago in April to face that issue. They came feeling that not all is well back home when it comes to getting our biblical teachings across.

"Our efforts in the church are spotty," said some of these folks. "We tend to pass the buck to peace and youth professionals."

Young people haven't caught the message. "Youth's understanding of peace tends to be incoherent," said some.

Adults haven't delivered the goods clearly. "Peace education has been narrowly focused on military conscription and non-payment of war taxes," said another group.

Planners of the consultation came with a dire warning. "Youth may pass through their teen years without exposure to the peace witness," they said.

So, these folks from the Mennonite Church and the General Conference had their work cut out for them as they gathered at the Christian Life Center here April 17-20. Coming from the United States and Canada, they knew they had to give shape to some programs that would liven up a lagging peace witness.

Lively in every way was the suggestion from Michael Warren, a Roman Catholic peace activist who teaches at St. John's University, Jamaica, N.Y., that youth be sent out as ambassadors for peace. "If you want Mennonite youth to learn about peace," he said, "that's the most dynamic way."

He was sure that young people from the Mennonite-Anabaptist tradition had something special to bring to other people. "The mission of Mennonite youth," he said, "is to make the peace tradition vital for our time."

Of course, Warren, the founder of the Youth for Peace movement within the Catholic church, had no intention of sending out any evangelists untrained and without a grasp of the primary facts about the nature of the world and the gospel.

He said he would start with a 24-hour weekend conference to build awareness. "A weekend has special power for young people if the Word of God is announced," he said, "and the spirit of Jesus, a rousting upsetting spirit, is there."

Content of the gospel was defined by Sue Clemmer Steiner as shalom and the living stream of history. A teacher and writer from Waterloo, Ont., she defined shalom as the good news: life that's whole, safe and sound. Her goal was to bring to students "a memory of the stream from the past, a common discernment for finding the stream in the present, and courage and hope for facing the future with the goal clearly in view."

After the vision came the need to bring it to life. The assembled group came up with over 100 ideas of how to do peace education. Many dealt with sharpening present tools such as books, pamphlets, films, videos and Sunday school lessons. Some ideas were less traditional: non-violent basketball cheers and war toy free zones.

An important learning experience for young people, Warren said, is to encounter the victims of injustice. "You have a great resource," he said. "You have missionaries in the places where there are victims."

The congregation is itself a resource for teaching. "The church should have sessions on the issues that divide the church," said Warren, "regularly."

Ed Metzler (left), conference moderator, and speaker Michael Warren

Such an approach was related to Steiner's goals as well. "The underlying strategy," she said, "has to do with engaging youth in dialogue with credible voices, and that means making our own voices and actions credible."

"The assembled community has a lifestyle, and that's the educative force," said Warren. "They are the ones who come together and stand in the circle of faith."

Above all, Warren cherished the idea of Mennonite youth as evangelists for peace.

The idea appealed to John Stoner, secretary of Mennonite Central Committee's Peace Section (U.S.). "Mennonite youth being teachers of peace? Maybe it's too simple; but maybe it's most profound." Referring to Ron Sider's vision of Christian peacemaker teams going out to the trouble spots of the world and, if necessary, "dying by the thousands," he said, "to be teachers of peace is part of that."

Warren affirmed the notion that youth could do it. "It makes a big difference whether we make young people subject to our ministry or whether we are going to introduce them to their ministry." *Maynard Shelly*

What is my view of missions? In what ways will I share my faith with others who aren't Christians? Will I be able to fit into another culture? These and other questions were asked by 30 Hesston (Kan.) College and Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.) students as they attended an overseas missions retreat at the activity center near Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., Feb. 14-15. The retreat was sponsored by the General Conference Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

A new series of mission education materials is nearing completion. Distribution of the completed packets is scheduled for the Saskatoon '86 triennial sessions. New resource materials form the backbone of a 17-session course on specific mission programs of the General Conference. Users study each location, the people who live in these places and the ministries under way there. Distribution will include one free packet per church, to be received at the Saskatoon conference, if possible. Additional copies can be ordered for $4.50.

Bluffton (Ohio) College's social work program was recently granted continued accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education, according to Paul Klassen, associate professor of social work and program director. This continues the accreditation of the program, first achieved in 1982, through the 1988-89 academic year.

MCC executive focuses on young people in service

Winnipeg (MCC)—"The message young people are getting constantly is, 'You don't have enough of this or that,' " said Saskatchewan Mennonite Central Committee member Florence Driedger at recent meetings here.

She said that today's youth may feel a sense of hopelessness about world problems and their ability to make a difference. "It's critical that we give them the message that they are desperately needed."

Driedger's words sum up the concerns of many attending the April 11-12 meeting of the MCC executive committee, where discussion centered around a steady decrease in the percentage of young people in their 20s serving with MCC. Voluntary service continues to grow—the number of MCC workers serving worldwide recently hit the 1,000 mark for the first time—but the average age has risen to 35 from 25 in 1968.

Committee members expressed concern that inexperienced young people are not being given the same opportunities to develop their skills in overseas assignments as their predecessors are.

A variety of reasons were given for the change, from a shift in cultural attitudes to the reluctance of overburdened overseas administrators to accept inexperienced volunteers for difficult assignments. Another factor is the increase in experienced volunteers who are extending their terms of service, and the growing number of retirees seeking assignments.

The committee continued to struggle with the issues posed by MCC employees whose request not to have income taxes withheld was rejected after long debate at the MCC annual meeting in January. It was decided at that time that, despite this decision, MCC should continue to affirm the integrity of those objecting to war taxes and establish a committee that would study and create broader awareness of the impact of militarism on refugees, hunger and development.

But the mandate of that group, which is to begin meeting in June, was not clearly defined. Executive committee chairman Elmer Neufeld said that there seems to be a "strong expectation" from some that the special committee will continue to work specifically on the tax withholding issue. Others said the committee's task was to struggle with congregations to find legal ways to express a Christian witness on the issue of militarism.

It was also reported that the General Conference Mennonite Church has had further discussion regarding how to counsel MCC to respond to the request from its staff on income tax withholding. At MCC's annual meeting it was reported that MCC representatives had met with constituent conferences and that none had counseled MCC to honor the request of staff. In March the General Conference's General Board decided to counsel MCC "that they honor requests of their employees to not have their taxes withheld, in line with General Conference policy."

In other business the executive committee agreed to provide $441,000 over the next five years for a new land purchase project aiding Indians settling in the central Chaco region of Paraguay, in which Paraguayan and European Mennonites and the Paraguayan government are also participating. Also approved was a proposal to help small groups establish new SELFHELP Crafts stores by cosigning locally obtained loans. *Doreen Martens*

Executive secretary position

For the **Commission on Education** of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., open **September 1986**.

Christian education background, administrative experience and familiarity with General Conference needed. Interim appointment a possibility.

Interested candidates submit resumes by **June 15** to:
Vern Preheim
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114.

Position available

Spruce Lake Retreat has an opening for a **food service director**. Spruce Lake Retreat is a Christian retreat center and camp owned by Franconia Mennonite Camp Association, located in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. This is a salaried, year-round position with housing and other benefits provided.

Contact:
Paul Beiler, Administrator
Spruce Lake Retreat
Route 1, Box 605
Canadensis, PA 18325
(717) 595-7505.

Marketing . . .

So you're a whiz at marketing . . . but can you sell ox-drawn cultivators to Tanzanian farmers? Now there's a challenge!

If your marketing skills are sharp and you can adapt to a Third World culture, we may have a place for you.

Call us for more information. Non-risk takers need not apply.

Mennonite Economic Development
Associates
400-280 Smith St.
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K2
(204) 944-1995.

Three executive staff people from offices of the General Conference attended the 44th annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals March 4-6 in Kansas City, Mo.: Stanley Bohn representing home ministries, Glendon Klaassen for overseas mission and Vern Preheim, GC general secretary.

Meeting under the theme "Principles for the Mission of the Church in Latin America," representatives from Mennonite churches in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay met in Montevideo, Uruguay, for the third Latin American Mennonite Conference of the Southern Cone Jan. 30-Feb. 2. The themes studied were drawn from the ministry of Jesus (Matthew 9:35) and the Holy Spirit's endowment of the church (Ephesians 4).

"We have become connoisseurs of disciplines," said Stan Thornburg, pastor of Redwood Friends Church, Portland, Ore., guest speaker for Spiritual Formation Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., March 12-16. Thornburg challenged the seminarians and area clergy to work at spiritual direction, a vital part of pastoring that is largely ignored today, he said. The most important criterion for spiritual direction by pastors, he said, is that they listen to God themselves.

Contras take over Honduran Mennonite church, villagers flee

Moriah, Honduras (MCC)—Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries (contras) took over the Mennonite church here on March 22, Palm Sunday. The guerrillas stored their guns inside and established the church as a base.

The villagers had been hearing sounds of battle and were in a state of alert. When the contras moved into the village the villagers pulled together the few possessions they had and fled by mule and foot to the hills of the neighboring Honduran department of Olancho.

It took over a week before news of what happened to the Moriah Mennonite Church reached the nearest Mennonite church in Danli. Members of the Danli church heard reports that the village of Moriah was abandoned and were worried about their brothers and sisters.

The Moriah Church was established through the efforts of a Mennonite pastor who visited the village. Nearly all 20 families living in the village were active in the Mennonite church.

At an April 1 meeting in Danli to talk about the problems the villagers faced, one pastor said he tried to visit Moriah during Holy Week but found the road closed due to fighting.

Someone at the meeting wondered whether the people would return to their village now that the contras were gone. "Probably not," said the pastor, "I talked with others from nearby villages. They say, 'The U.S. government [which supports the contras] is deaf. We're blind if we go back.' "

Another participant at the meeting added, "Yes, as long as the contras are permitted to live nearby, Honduran neighbors won't be safe."

The road was still closed, and no one knew where to begin looking for the Mennonites of Moriah. One brother said he was confident that as soon as the people settled, someone would come to Danli with news of what had happened. "Then we'll have to be prepared to help them with whatever their needs are," he added.

There was much speculation in Honduras on what really happened during what some call the "Holy Week War." In the United States the war was considered an invasion of Honduras by Nicaragua. From Honduras we know a few facts.

The Sandinista government army did enter Honduras in mid-March, just as they have other times in the past to attack contra camps. The difference this time was that the Sandinistas had to pass deeper into Honduran territory because the contra camps had moved further inland.

The Honduran government took this "invasion" in stride. The president, the head of the armed forces and other high officials all went on their Holy Week vacations as planned. The U.S. government sent $20 million in emergency military aid, and Honduran troops were sent by helicopter to the area of fighting.

What the Honduran troops did is unknown. The Honduran daily *El Tiempo* quotes a Honduran military officer who said that not one Honduran soldier was killed or injured, "only a few light bruises or twisted ankles that they suffered walking through the hills."

The "war," by all reliable reports, was between the contras based in Honduras and the Sandinistas who are enraged with the way the contras attack Nicaragua and then flee to safety in Honduras.

The Honduran Mennonite Church Social Action Commission is beginning a development program in this troubled border region. MCC workers Luke and Carmen Schrock-Hurst began the work in April through the local Mennonite churches. *Linda Shelly*

Pastor needed

Hope Mennonite Fellowship, North Battleford, Sask., seeks the services of a pastor who has an interest in growing with a small, active congregation and reaching out to the neighborhood.

Please submit resumes to:
Pulpit Committee
1901-96th St.
North Battleford, SK S9A 0J3.

Latin American workshop

Latin American workshop in Bogotá, Colombia, July 6-Aug. 4. Observation, experience, analysis and interpretation of Latin American reality from a Christian commitment to liberation. The cost for this ninth workshop is $649, sponsored by Program of Conscientization for North Americans (PCNA).

Contact:
Paul E. Stucky, coordinator
1614 Market
Galveston, TX 77550
(409) 762-1391.

Assistant pastor needed

First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a full-time assistant pastor, commencing Sept. 1. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry and assisting with pulpit duties. Ability to give leadership in church music would be an asset.

For information or application contact:
Archie Epp, congregational chairman
1513 Argyle Ave.
Saskatoon, SK S7H 2W3
(306) 374-1516.

What is pornography? Does it really contribute to violence against women? Are Mennonites affected by pornography? Can Mennonites do anything to affect such a huge industry? Ethel Yake Metzler, a therapist with Family Counseling Service of Elkhart, Ind., raises these questions in the January-February issue of *Report*, the bimonthly publication of the Mennonite Central Committee on Women's Concerns. Copies are available from Emily Will, MCC, Box M, Akron, PA 17501, or Peggy Regehr, MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8.

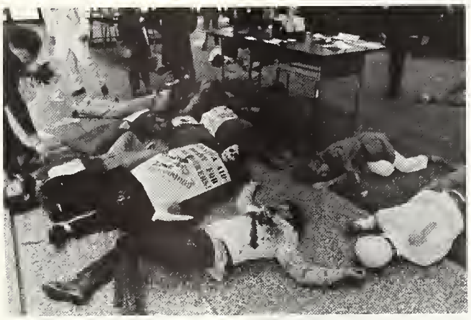
March 22 marked the beginnings of 75 years of inter-Mennonite cooperation in mission outreach. On that date in 1911 a group of 20 men representing two Mennonite denominations met at Meadows, Ill., to form a new partnership for missionary activity in Africa. This developed into the Congo Inland Mission, known today as Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. Now AIMM consists of six groups and ministers in five African countries.

More than 160 national and regional religious leaders called on President Reagan to join the Soviet Union in suspending nuclear tests. Representatives of many major faiths, including 52 bishops and 17 rabbis, signed an open letter to the president. Among the signers were prominent women, black and Hispanic religious leaders.

Chicago Mennonites protest U.S. policies in Central America

Chicago (Synapses)—Eight Chicago area Mennonites participated in a die-in and street witness at the post office in Chicago on April 14 to demonstrate their opposition to President Reagan's request for $100 million in aid to the contras in Nicaragua.

Kris Chupp and Dorothy Friesen joined 25 others who entered the post office and dropped to the ground one by one to dramatize the reality faced by Nicaraguans daily as a result of contra raids on that country. Orlando Redekop placed flowers on the "dead" and told the people mailing their tax forms, "Our tax money is used to kill Nicaraguans."



Other Mennonites joined the 300 demonstrators outside the post office who put up posters depicting a bloody hand on a tax form. Paul Weaver of Markham Mennonite Church said, "We call the American people to recognize what their tax dollars are paying for and to take a stand against this immoral activity."

No arrests were made. The "dead" were dragged from the building and heaped outside the door. "I was heartened," said Friesen, "that the officer accepted the flower I gave him in the name of the dead women and children of Nicaragua before he dragged me away." Participants in ongoing demonstrations at the federal buildings in Chicago have made a concerted attempt to explain the purpose of the demonstrations to the police officers.

The Mennonite participants are part of the National Pledge of Resistance Movement whose members have committed themselves to resist U.S. military escalation in Central America.

Mennonite Central Committee Canada (MCCC) invites applications for coordinator of Personnel and Administrative Services (PAS). The coordinator is responsible for personnel, information, accounting, office management and computer services departments. Knowledge/experience with MCC essential.

Location: MCCC office, Winnipeg
Starting date: **Aug. 1**

Send inquires/applications to:
Executive Director
MCCC
201-1483 Pembina Highway
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8.

Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Service, Inc. (MHRS) is seeking a director to begin duties as soon as possible. Responsibilities include all operations and programs, personnel management, financial and long-range planning, publicity, fund raising and public relations. Salary negotiable.

MHRS is a non-profit construction company, serving the needs of the elderly and low-income people. Applications from women and minorities are encouraged.

Send resume to:
MHRS
2038 N. Broadway
Wichita, KS 67214.

Executive director required

OPAL INC., a Christian agency in southern New Brunswick providing services to mentally handicapped people and their families, is seeking an executive director to start this summer. Salary negotiable.

Qualifications: commitment to provide service in the name of Christ, commitment to the idea of a fluid set of supports for mentally handicapped people, experience in administration and public relations.

Deadline for applications: **May 31**.

Submit resumes to:
OPAL INC.
Box 336
Sussex, NB E0E 1P0.

Position available

Resource Centre manager for Conference of Mennonites in Canada, starting **July 1**.

The Resource Centre manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation of a small resource centre, which loans films, books, kits and other resource materials to congregations. The manager also participates in the selection and purchase of new materials.

Orders for materials are received by personal visits, phone and letter. The manager is expected to offer advice and counsel about appropriate materials as well as conducting some educational workshops in CMC congregations.

Qualifications:
- ability to relate to people
- experienced in work of the congregation
- some theological training
- a keen interest in the work of the conference
- training in education desirable.

Send applications to:
Rudy A. Regehr
Congregational Resources Board
600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4
(204) 888-6781.

Application deadline: **June 1**.

"Leading a Christian Life" was the theme for this year's Christian emphasis week at Bluffton (Ohio) College March 17-21. According to co-chair Portia Miller, the week was designed to "provide an opportunity for fellowship and growth, with a week devoted to learning more about ourselves and life as a Christian."

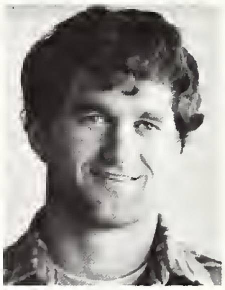
Elderhostel, a summer residential program for people 60 and over, will be held at Bluffton (Ohio) College June 22-29. The fee for one week, which includes tuition, campus housing and dining, is $205. Three classes are being offered: "Viva Italia," "Who Is This Man Jesus?" and "Say It with Clay." Registration deadline is June 1. Contact Don and Nancy Schweingruber, Bluffton College, OH 45817, (419) 358-8015.

One hundred fifty high school and college age youth from British Columbia to Ontario attended the Peace-It-Together conference sponsored by Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, March 7-9. Presenting answers to the question What does it mean to be an active peacemaker? was resource person Arnold Snyder, professor at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., and former director for Witness for Peace in Nicaragua. "I believe that Mennonite peacemaking in the '80s will have to come to grips with the suffering of non-Mennonites," he said.

RECORD

Duffy

Grant


Mueller

Reimer

deaths

Elizabeth Goertz, former General Conference missionary to China, died March 31 at the age of 93. Goertz, a registered nurse, also served in India, Mexico and the United States before retiring to Parkside Homes in Hillsboro, Kan.

Marge Roberts, Arvada (Colo.) Church, died March 25 at the age of 57. She was a tireless worker for world peace.

Roger Siebert, pastor at First Church, Hillsboro, Kan., died April 12 following a heart attack. He was born Aug. 4, 1935, in Great Bend, Kan. In 1961 he married Catherine Snyder. They have two children, Ruth and David.

Matilda Kliewer Voth, 87, died April 1 in Newton, Kan. She and her husband, William, who preceded her in death, were General Conference missionaries in China, Japan and Taiwan.

MINISTERS

Walter Braun, pastor at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, resigned effective in August 1987, not this year, as was previously printed.

workers

Ed Barkman was appointed executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan April 1. He and his wife, Dorothy, have two children, Nalia and Vaughn.

Maureen Duffy, St. Christopher's Church, Vandalia, Ohio, has begun an 18-month Mennonite Voluntary Service term as a lay minister at the Sacred Heart Shelter in Seattle. She received a degree in languages from Georgetown University. Her parents are Edward and Therese Duffy.

Kathryn Grant, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., has begun a two-year MVS term as a child-care worker at the Carter Day Care Center in Winnipeg. Her parents are George and Margaret Grant.

Diane and *Tony Miller*, Kalona (Iowa) Church, have begun MVS terms on the staff and faculty of Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz. He received a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Va. Her parents are Carolyn and Leslie Hochstetler. His are Edwin and Mary Jane Miller.

Alan Mueller, First Church, Halstead, Kan., has begun a one-year MVS term as a housing rehabilitation worker in Cleveland, Ohio. He received a bachelor's degree in industrial arts from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. His parents are Jean and Waldo Mueller.

Charles Reimer, Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., has begun a two-year MVS term on staff with the Spanish Coalition in Chicago. He received a bachelor's degree in economics from Goshen (Ind.) College. His mother is Phyllis Reimer.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College is inviting applications for the position of residence director, beginning **Aug. 1**. Duties include guiding and coordinating residence life on the campus. A detailed job description is available.

Interested people should submit resumes and references to:
John H. Neufeld
600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4
(204) 888-6781.

Deadline: **June 6.**

Mennonite Collegiate Institute has an opening as of **June 1** for a
- business administrator

and has openings in **September** for teachers in
- music
- boys' physical education
- girls' physical education
- French
- physics and mathematics.

Please send resume to:
Allan Dueck, principal
MCI
Box 250
Gretna, MB R0G 0V0
(204) 327-5891.

Pastor needed

Compass Immanuel Church, Rapid View, Sask., requires a full-time pastor who is willing to emphasize an evangelical approach in preaching, counseling and working with young people. We are a small, growing, rural church with about 55 people attending, and lots of potential for outreach.

For more information contact:
Compass Immanuel Church
Box 47
Rapid View, SK S0M 2M0.

Job openings

Director, **skill trainer** and **direct-care staff** are needed at **Oregon Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.**, (group homes for developmentally disabled adults).

Send inquiries to:
Jane Toews
Teaching Research
345 Monmouth Ave.
Monmouth, OR 97361
(503) 838-1220, ext. 401.

Position available

Director for residential home for four developmentally disabled adults in Fresno, Calif. Live-in with seminary/college student assistants.

For more information, contact:
Duane Heffelbower
Central California Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.
1010 G St.
Reedley, CA 93654
(209) 638-6911.

Faculty positions

Goshen College has two faculty openings beginning fall 1986. Applicants must be committed to Christian values, including peace in the Mennonite tradition. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. People interested in either of these positions should send a letter of application, resume, transcripts and the names of three references to:
Willard Martin, dean
Goshen College
Goshen, IN 46526.

Application deadline is **May 30**.

A full-time, tenure-track faculty position in **computer and information science**. Experience in information systems and the ability to teach undergraduate courses in Pascal, COBOL, systems analysis, database management systems and decision support systems required. M.S. required, Ph.D. preferred. Applicants should have teaching and industrial experience.

A full-time position in **English** for fall trimester 1986 only. Teaching assignment will consist of courses in "The Study of Literature," "Expository Writing" and "The Literate Voice." Applicants should have teaching experience. Ph.D. preferred.

New Video Resource Promotes Growing, Healthy Congregations

When a Congregation Cares Video to accompany the book, *When a Congregation Cares* by Abraham and Dorothy Schmitt.

A HERALD PRESS VIDEOTAPE
When a Congregation Cares
A resource for the book by Dorothy & Abraham Schmitt

When a Congregation Cares

Abraham and Dorothy Schmitt show how *any* congregation can organize a caring, counseling team or teams to help members of the congregation who are in a crisis situation. Recognizing that frequently the pastor shoulders an enormous burden for the welfare of his members, the authors have developed a model for using ordinary laypersons and professionals from the congregation in a caring, supportive role.

The 45-minute **When a Congregation Cares Video** shows why the caring team concept is vital in growing congregations, how several churches—both large and small and from various denominations—have used the idea. The video is packaged with one copy of the book **When a Congregation Cares** and a viewing guide.

When a Congregation Cares Video is available through your local Christian bookstore or Herald Press.
One-half inch VHS tape, 45-minutes: $69.50, in Canada $97.30
Additional copies of the book: $6.95, in Canada $9.75

Herald Press

Resources for church, home, and community
Herald Press, Dept. MEN,
616 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, PA 15683
117 King Street West, Kitchener, ON N2G 4M5

Taking positions

When *National Geographic* printed their article concerning human evolution (November 1985 issue), more than 100 people wrote in to cancel their subscriptions. They did not wish to receive a magazine that so degraded God's principles.

For several years *The Mennonite* has been printing articles on homosexuality, never seeming to take a stand.

I was almost in despair until I read the letter from David Janzen condemning homosexuality. That letter was a miracle.

Maybe it's time *The Mennonite* decided where it stands on the issue—so we could know if such a magazine has a place in our homes. *Mrs. DeWayne Epp, Route 3, York, NE 68467*

March 25

Editor's note: We have tried to identify with the whole conference in this struggle. I hope we are all looking for healing rather than judgment.

Should we move on?

We are being challenged to put "pacifism on the front burner," using Dennis K. Masser's March 25 issue metaphor. Are we trying to hide behind the cloak "evangelism is needful" when deeper living is what the Spirit is challenging us to? Wouldn't living examples of working for peace be an effective tool of evangelism, or need we never go beyond that first commitment? Are we reaching for people's approval? Do we shed tears when the cries of the oppressed are not heard?

Our young people are yearning for serious examples of following Christ from parents and the older generation, especially in non-violence. The youth need not be sacrificed in a modern Moriah (Willard Unruh meditation in the March 25 issue), provided we each live fully committed active Christian lives. We can make a difference. Let's not push off our responsibilities. *Amelia Epp, Route 1, Box 215, Henderson, NE 68371*

April 1

Point them to Jesus

Frank Trnka's statement (March 11 letter) disturbed me. "Those of us who grow up to find ourselves gay or lesbian know that this identity is a part of God's purpose for our lives. . . ." I have bad news and good news for Frank. The bad news is that God's inerrant Word, the Bible, disagrees with modern psychology at this point. The Bible declares homosexuality and lesbianism a perversion. It tells us that sinful men and women, not God, "dishonor their own bodies between themselves" (Romans 1:24). Sinful men and women practice these unnatural lusts. As stated in Romans 1:27, "Men working that which is improper," and women (Romans 1:28) ". . . change the natural use into what is against nature."

Heterosexuals, guilty of fornication and adultery, have God's judgment pronounced upon their sins. Fornication and adultery are premarital and extramarital sex relationships between people of the opposite sex. God has ordained the sex relationship for marriage only. Since homosexuality and lesbianism have to do with sex relationships between people of the same sex, God describes such perversion as "unnatural" or contrary to the way he created the human race. Such perversions are placed on the same level as bestiality or sex with animals.

The good news is that God is able and willing to forgive all sinners, heterosexual or homosexual, who recognize their sin and humbly ask Jesus to transform their lives.

According to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, fornicators, adulterers and homosexuals who came to Jesus for salvation, were forgiven and received into the church. Paul writes, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed . . . sanctified . . . and justified, in the name of Jesus" (v. 11).

Let us be good neighbors, especially to homosexuals and lesbians, by praying for them, by loving them and pointing them to Jesus, who wants to make them whole. *Harold D. Burkholder, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Burns, KS 66840*

April 2

We need it for our growth

The article on "liberation theology" (March 11 issue) distresses me. In the North American world of *Dynasty*, *Dallas* and pornography, I'm not sure we have any right to say anything about the family life of Latin Americans, let alone justify our prosperity by our morality. The malnutrition and suffering of the Latin Americans is due to poverty and powerlessness, not poor family life.

The writer is making the age-old mistake of placing the blame for the poverty and suffering upon the victim. It is a self-righteous trap. We say the poor are lazy, the bankrupt farmers are poor managers, the destitute have too many children, the hungry are poor farmers, and rape is the woman's fault.

Job's friends made the same error of blaming the victim for his ills. At the end of the book God requires them to apologize and Job to intercede for them (Job 42:7-10). It was only then that God returned Job to his former status. Perhaps this is required of us in North America, before God's justice can be obtained in Latin America. It is when we stand with the poor and the oppressed in love, not in charity or as faultfinders, that the issue of suffering can be addressed in God's wholistic way.

Liberation theology must be evaluated from the bottom up, from the vantage point of the poor. To make judgments from our ivory tower of health, wealth and power about the merits of liberation theology is at best inappropriate, at worst pharisaic. We as Mennonites need the perspective of the poor, and we can only obtain it by working with them. As individuals we need to seek opportunities to know the victims for our spiritual growth and to enlarge our vision of God's kingdom.

We need to listen and learn from our brothers and sisters in the developing world. The vibrancy of their Christianity and theology has much to teach us. *Robert Bartel, Box 191, Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0*

April 7

Let's walk humbly

And we claim to be the "good guys."

On March 16, the keys to a big, modern hospital facility were handed to Santa Cruz officials—a gift to Bolivia from the Japanese government.

My heart rejoices in the potential that this gesture holds for the good of Bolivia's people. Such facilities are much needed.

Then my rejoicing turned sour as I reflected on the action of the U.S. administration in Nicaragua. My thoughts went as follows: Why cannot the strongest and richest country in the world do likewise? What if, instead of $100 million in equipment to kill, the United States were to give that amount to Nicaragua in bulldozers and graders, tractors and building materials, along with trained road builders, teachers and doctors, instead of "military advisers"?

If the U.S. administration were at all sensitive to what it is that invites a turning toward "communism," they would know that such a venture would be a thousand times more effective than military aid in staying communism.

The interest of Americans and of the whole world would be better served if, rather than "walking tall" as an arrogant bully, we would "walk humbly" before God and with humankind the world over. *Menno J. Ediger, Casa 213, Santa Cruz, Bolivia*

April 7

Renewal *and* liberation

I agree with Brian Epp that Christians can and must take the positive points of liberation theology while leaving the negative points behind (March 11 issue). The current ferment throughout Latin America forces Christians to examine the historical and contemporary situations of the "two-thirds" world. Latin American countries continue to be oppressed by economic, cultural and political forces that place them in a second-place position. Often the Christian church, be it Catholic or Protestant, has endorsed these oppressive forces to the overall detriment of the people in these countries. Liberation theologians say it is time the church sides with the poor.

I disagree with Epp's statement that suffering is a direct consequence of how we live. Sometimes we face it because the world is an evil place. I don't believe that we as comfortable North Americans can say that liberation theology minimizes the positive place of suffering.

I lived in a rural Bolivian village for 2½ years and encountered suffering as I have never seen before. The suffering of the Bolivians often did draw them closer to God. But I could never say that their suffering was because of their personal sins or that more suffering would somehow make the economic or political situation right or just. Rather, their suffering was a result of oppression. What is needed is systemic reform to help them achieve a better lifestyle—physically, educationally and spiritually—in order to alleviate the suffering brought about by evil structures.

It is true that the people of Latin America need spiritual renewal and revival. We all do. As we go about the task of evangelism and discipleship we must also be agents of change for a more just social order.

Today liberation theology centers around the sociopolitical realm and the proper role of the church in that. The liberation of Christ is much more than socioeconomic liberation. True biblical liberation is a universal liberation from all the things that corrupt God's plan for humankind. *Tim Penner, 1315 N. 75th St., Apt. 3A, Philadelphia, PA 19151*

April 8

Read, discuss *The Mennonite*

Our small group, which meets every Sunday evening, has agreed that for the coming months we shall discuss articles which appear in *The Mennonite*. All like the idea. Several years ago we followed this discipline and were nourished by it. *Robert Kreider, North Newton, KS 67117*

April 15

Decision by power

The decision of the majority of the General Board (March 25 issue) to present a resolution on sexuality at Saskatoon disappoints me. It makes sexual decision making in the church a win-lose proposition. Through careful searching of the Scriptures, diligent prayer, personal encounter with Christ and with critical evaluation of our own biases, some of us have concluded that homosexuality is a gift and not a curse. Other Mennonites sincerely believe homosexuality can never be God's will. The board's majority now proposes that the latter groups should win the debate.

Biblical interpretation and moral discernment are thereby reduced to simple power. Heterosexual Christians have the power so they get to choose which Bible passages will be applied to their lesbian and gay sisters and brothers.

I respect the integrity of brothers and sisters who believe homosexuality is wrong. I do not expect them to glibly abandon that point of view. But I do expect them to acknowledge my equality in Christ.

I have felt those wounds deeply. More importantly, I remember that when one member suffers, the whole body of Christ suffers. *John Linscheid, 330 E. Mt. Airy Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19119*

April 15

Our home is open for **bed and breakfast during Expo '86**. The rates are $35 per couple per night. No smokers or small children, please. Easy access to Expo.

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It was large and fancy

Ross L. Bender

First Mennonite Church of Philadelphia around the turn of this century has been described by John L. Ruth as the "largest (and fanciest)" church in the Eastern District. It retained its statistical pre-eminence until the early 1930s, when it was surpassed in membership totals by a daughter church, Zion of Souderton. Some measure of its fanciness may be discerned in this excerpt from the 50th anniversary book: "During the summer of 1900, while the pastor was spending a pleasant vacation in Europe, the congregation installed a pipe organ at a cost of $1,658.87. . . . This pipe organ is, no doubt, the first instrument of this kind ever to be used in a Mennonite church in America." Another intimation of its style is its appointment of an interim minister in 1929 who was not only female but Episcopalian to boot.

If First Mennonite in its heyday was many things that its country cousins were not, certainly it was everything that most contemporary urban Mennonite churches are not—large, wealthy and influential in the wider church. While the story of this first urban congregation is uniquely fascinating, it is so atypical that it will serve only as a peculiar prelude to the history of city Mennonite churches. In fact, its story leads back out to the suburbs, where First Mennonite now enjoys a peaceful old age.

In 1862 Daniel Hege was soliciting contributions for a Mennonite seminary, and he visited families in Philadelphia who had retained membership in country churches. He believed there were enough urban Mennonite migrants to form the core of a church, and at his instigation services were begun in members' homes. In 1865 a chapel was rented and later purchased on Diamond Street between Fifth and Reese, which had previously belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church and then to the Church of God. A brick building was built in 1881.

The emerging congregation was served by visiting pastors and then by several short-term pastors, including Samuel Clemmer, Andrew B. Shelly and Albert Funk. By 1872 the church had about doubled in size from its original membership of 33, but a dispute over the issue of transition from German- to English-language services caused about a third of the members to leave and join the Moravian Church.

First Mennonite Church in its "glory" days on Reese and Diamond in downtown Philadelphia.

It was during the pastorate of Nathaniel Bertolet Grubb (an early editor of *The Mennonite*) from 1882 to 1921 that First Mennonite began its rapid and sustained period of growth. By 1890 there were 204 members, of whom 139 had been received by Grubb. By 1921 the number had more than doubled to 458. New and euphonious names like Dettra, Dimmick, Dippel and Dobbs supplemented such charter member names as Moyer, Clymer and Beidler on the membership rolls. While this growth was no doubt partly due to the commanding personality of the pastor, there is also a suggestion that crusade evangelism played a part. A 50th-anniversary speaker in 1915 was the chairman of the evangelical committee of the Billy Sunday Campaign, who spoke about the "recent revival."

Church planting was also an emphasis of Grubb and First Mennonite. In 1887 he held services for a group of First Mennonite members residing in Souderton, north of the city. Then biweekly services were begun, and Grubb and Andrew B. Shelly alternated in preaching. A building was completed and dedicated in 1893 to house the new Zion Mennonite Church. Second Mennonite of Philadelphia was planted at the corner of Franklin and Indiana in 1899, and Grubb's son Silas was the first pastor. This church began with a nucleus of 36 members and a subsidy, both supplied by First Church. By 1912 it was self-supporting and in 1915 had 190 members.

In 1911 Annie Funk was ordained as a minister by N. B. Grubb, although she did not serve at First Mennonite. However, Mary E. Bakewell served as interim minister from September 1929 to April 1930. Her "Pastor's Report" in the 1930 Yearbook is particularly eloquent: "And at the outset I wish to go on record with a word of gratitude for the welcome accorded me, and for the friendly relations so swiftly and generously established. Under any circumstances such kindness would have been noted, but of this unique situation—a woman, and an Episcopalian, occupying your pulpit—it is only fitting to speak in terms of utmost appreciation. The fact in itself brings hope to the church at large. There has here been evident a sense of Christian fellowship which, more than other factors, can bring to pass that church unity of which we have long dreamed and toward which we would often seem to move unwillingly."

First Mennonite reached its peak membership of 484 in 1928 and then began a gradual decline. Already in 1915 the church complained of the problems of members moving to the suburbs, and by 1950, when Curtis Bedsworth became pastor, a fifth of the 250 members resided outside the city, mostly in the northern suburbs. During the 1950s the neighborhood surrounding the church began a rapid population shift from white to black and Hispanic. The process of "white flight" contributed to the dispersal of the members, and in the late '50s the treasurer lived in Willow Grove, the chairman of the trustees in Ambler, and the church moderator in Jenkintown.

In this crisis atmosphere, while attempts were made to integrate the church and more members moved away, there were frequent visits by conference officials and other consultants, including Vincent Harding and Peter Ediger. In a context of growing racial tension, there was intense debate as to whether the church should stay or move.

In 1959 First Mennonite purchased a house and property in Huntingdon Valley, a northeast suburb that was strongly Jewish and Catholic. Eastern District missions committee had originally bought the property as a church-planting venture, but the Church of the Good Samaritan, which had met in the house, moved to New Holland. A church building was completed in 1963 and in September 1964 about 125 members regrouped to worship at Huntingdon Valley (until then services were held both there and in the city). The Philadelphia property was sold to a black congregation, Faith Chapel.

John Freed was the Philadelphia Mennonite Council coordinator in 1982 when he was asked to visit two elderly people who had been members of First Mennonite and who were destitute. Later he went to Huntingdon Valley to report to the church. He found a congregation of about 20 people, the youngest of whom was over 50. A seminary student who was paid to preach Sunday mornings constituted the pastoral leadership. The congregation eventually asked Freed if he would serve as part-time pastor.

Freed, who is also part-time church planting and evangelism consultant for Eastern District, has made a career of serving churches in a process of transition. As pastor of Fox Street in the South Bronx during the '60s, he worked in a time of transition from mission church to indigenous city church identity. At Towamencin, north of Philadelphia, he was the congregation's first salaried pastor. More recently he served on the pastoral team at Germantown during a process of reconstruction. At First Mennonite the challenge is to know whether a new congregation can be implanted alongside the old or whether this setting is not appropriate for a fresh start. A Korean church has already expressed interest in buying the building.

Pastor John Freed and his wife, Pattie, who serve First Mennonite at this time.

What does the story of First Mennonite say about the urban Mennonite experience? It is such an unusual church that perhaps no generalizations can be made. But it speaks of the explosion in church growth in the General Conference in the late 19th century. And it speaks of the vicissitudes of city life, the challenges to a congregation's existence not posed by the hinterland environment. The life of First Mennonite has been flashy and tragic, but at least, like life in the city, it has been interesting.

Ross L. Bender, 613 S. 48th St., Philadelphia, PA 19143, is an Eastern Mennonite Board Home Ministries associate with Vietnamese Mennonite Church of Philadelphia.

First Mennonite Church of Huntingdon Valley today.

Anabaptist letters

The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism: The Grebel Letters and Related Documents, *edited by Leland Harder (Herald Press, 1985, 815 pages)*

Reviewed by Walter Klaassen, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6

This major work of collecting and translating the documents relating in particular to Conrad Grebel, and more generally to the origins and early years of Anabaptism in Switzerland, was in preparation for a long time. It began with the work of Edward Yoder, who translated and edited the Latin letters of Conrad Grebel in 1929. That edition was never published.

The core of the collection is the letters of Conrad Grebel from his student days, beginning in 1517 to December 1524, just before his commitment in believer's baptism to a new vision of the church. Many of the letters are addressed to his teacher and later brother-in-law Joachim von Watt (Vadian) and to other academic friends. Among them is a newly edited version of the letters of the Grebel group to Thomas Münster done by Elizabeth Horsch Bender.

Also included in this collection are the public documents relating to Grebel and the beginnings of Anabaptism. Many of these appear here for the first time in English. Important is the inclusion of six major pieces of writing by the Zürich Reformer Huldreich Zwingli, in which he speaks to the issues raised by his radical followers. Especially significant is his classic statement of the tension between the kind of justice that is possible in a fallen world and the righteousness to which God calls his people.

The reader is aided in interpreting the documents by the editor's careful introduction to each one and by fully 200 pages of explanatory notes. In addition he prepared character profiles of 106 people who inhabit these pages, complete with references to the documents to which they relate.

The translations read well for the most part. It is always difficult to translate the language of another time and a particular setting and get all the intended nuances. There is also an excellent foldout map of Zürich and its environs as well as one of the whole of Switzerland.

The editor deserves high praise for this volume. It will simplify the study of Swiss Anabaptist origins for everyone interested in the subject. It is also likely to stimulate new research. It is a learned work but of the kind that can be easily and effectively used by non-experts.

Politics and religion

Terry Miller: The Pacifist Politician from Hutterite Colony to State Capitol, *by Rod A. Janzen (Pine Hill Press, 1986, 141 pages)*

Reviewed by James Juhnke, Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117

Terry Miller of Freeman, S.D., is a full-time Christian worker for the North Battleford Group, a movement for Christian renewal. From 1980 to 1984 Miller served two terms in the South Dakota State Legislature. Rod A. Janzen, a former history teacher at Freeman College and principal of Freeman Academy, tells Miller's story as a case study of Christian involvement in and withdrawal from politics.

Miller's story is full of fascinating twists, turns and reversals. He was born to an ex-Amish family that tried to forget its Anabaptist roots, but he became a convinced Anabaptist himself. In high school Miller was an active conservative Goldwater Republican, but his political views later changed to favor a kind of populist democratic socialism. For years he was a novitiate among the Hutterian Brethren and was so dedicated to communitarian conformity that he "out-Hutterited the Hutterites." But later he was converted to an enthusiastic charismatic evangelicalism.

Miller was called the "conscience" of the South Dakota legislature. He surely did not fit conventional categories of liberalism and conservatism. On the liberal side he supported the nuclear freeze, opposed the death penalty and supported minority rights. On the conservative side he was anti-abortion, in favor of teaching creationism in public schools and in support of allowing private schools to operate without certified teachers or state accreditation. He organized prayer groups and served as an evangelist and pastor for fellow legislators. His convictions may have had Anabaptist and biblical foundations, but his aggressive style was very different from traditional Mennonite quietness.

Terry Miller is only 41. What does the future hold for such a gifted and unpredictable man? It may be too early to know whether his years in the South Dakota legislature were an aberration or a fulfillment. Perhaps the more important parts of Janzen's book are his descriptions of Hutterite life and of the North Battleford renewal movement.

Although Janzen clearly identifies the tensions in Miller's brief political career, the book stops short of drawing clear lessons. Was Miller more true to his Anabaptist convictions when he engaged in the controversies and compromises of public policy decisions or when he finally withdrew in frustration from the Republican Party and then from the legislature? Either way, the biography of Terry Miller makes fascinating reading.

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MEDITATION

A name for your group or class

"We need to choose a name for our class," the teacher said. "Something like Bereans or Corinthians."

Bereans? Half the churches I know have a Berean class. They like to say that Bereans "searched the Scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11) to see whether those things were so.

And the other half have a Corinthian class. Why anyone wants to call themselves Corinthians I have never figured out. "You are carnal," said Paul of the Corinthians in the Bible. "I spoke unto you as unto babes" (1 Corinthians 3:1).

Most churches also have a Mariner class. But we are quite landlocked—in Colorado.

A name for our class? We could be the Dalmatians. When people ask why, we can answer, "Search the Bible and see." Instead of being namesakes of people Paul took the gospel to, we could be namesakes of people Titus took the gospel to (2 Timothy 4:10).

But we're more than listeners and receivers. We're the over 50 group. Let's have something dynamic, solid, worthy of our years of faith and service. How about *Patriarchs*?

Too sexist? Too arrogant?

I have the perfect solution. We could be the Dodo class. A more meaningful name we will never find. There were three Dodoes in the Bible. Two were fathers of "mighty men of David," and one was grandfather of a judge (2 Samuel 23:9, 24 and Judges 10:1). Let's proudly bear our banner as fathers, mothers and grandfathers of mighty men of God.

What's that? You couldn't be proud of the name Dodo? Let me remind you, you're going to meet the Dodoes in heaven someday. You're sure to bump into at least one of them. So start planning what you're going to say. "Mr. Dodo? I'm very glad to meet you. I heard of you once down there. We voted on whether to use your name, and. . . ."

Well, the rest is your problem. For my part, I can say, "I recommended your name. What a great heritage you left for us, Mr. Dodo—rearing such a fine son and all."

OK, OK. I know when I've lost another round. You want something that sounds . . . well, you're worried about the impression it makes on the uninitiated. I have a solution for that too.

Let's be the Ruby class. Everyone knows how beautiful rubies are, even if they've never heard of "bright gems for his crowns." Listen, folks, there's powerful symbolism in this name. Paul wrote that some men build precious stones on the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:12). That's us, see? And John described the wall of the heavenly city. The foundations, he said, are garnished with precious stones (Revelation 21:19). So we are jewels in the dwelling of God. If you want a beautiful name, choose Ruby.

Too feminine? Well, we could be rubies without the name Ruby, because the King James word is *sard* stone or *sardius*. I suppose you wouldn't like Sards, but we could be known as the Sardonic class. Or, more fittingly, the Sardines (Revelation 4:3).

Ruth Beechick

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Do we know anything about kingdoms today? What could a "kingdom of God" possibly be?

In this issue we look at God's kingdom in a variety of ways: conversion as entry, healing from homosexuality, a congregation with ups and downs, our triennial sessions at Saskatoon, the second coming of Jesus Christ. .

Yes, there's a lot to the kingdom of God. Let's continue to work for its coming and to pray for it.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Healing for modern-day lepers

Mark Winslow

Over the past few years I have talked with some General Conference Mennonite pastors and other members who were unhappy with what they perceived to be our church's confusion or lack of biblical faithfulness concerning homosexuality. The study document *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life* is valuable toward helping us define and clarify a Christian understanding of sex.

As a pastor I have observed that homosexuality cuts across all economic, racial and religious boundaries. Studies conservatively estimate that at least 6 percent of our general population struggle with same-sex attraction. Could it be that 6 percent of our church members are also gay?

The past two years I have worked supportively with a member of our congregation who is an ex-homosexual. My relationship with this brother and with other Christians experiencing recovery from homosexuality has taught me several things.

First, the church has been the victim of ignorance, fear, self-righteousness and neglect in regard to homosexuals. We have feared it because we do not understand it and perhaps because we have feared our own sexuality. We have been self-righteous toward homosexual people. We have neglected our opportunities to help people with sexual identity problems. We have treated homosexuals like modern-day lepers. For that we need to repent.

Second, the church needs to clearly state that homosexual behavior, by biblical definition, is sin. Homosexual acts are never the will of God, as the inspired Scriptures and 3,000 years of traditional moral wisdom tell us. God's design is for monogamous, male-female coupling—not homosexual or lesbian. At the same time, God loves the people caught in homosexuality's snare and desires to liberate them.

A vocal minority of Mennonites have been guilty of imposing the 20th-century ideology of the Gay Liberation Movement upon the Bible by adopting a liberal biblical interpretation. This interpretation says that the traditional Judeo-Christian understanding of homosexuality as sin is in error. This interpretation attempts to make covenanted same-sex lover relationships as legitimate and holy as the monogamous marriage bond. This interpretation violates sound principles of biblical interpretation that I hold as an evangelical Anabaptist Christian.

Third, to help the homosexual within our congregations or without, we must recognize that there are psychological and relational needs that drive men and women into homosexual activity. Interpersonal and psychological factors are as important as the spiritual factors. Homosexual activity is not just sin; it is an attempt to meet legitimate but unmet psychological and relationship needs, albeit illegitimately.

In the past eight years ministries offering Christian healing for homosexuals have sprung up all over. They have much insight to offer both homosexuals and the church. They are most often headed up by ex-homosexuals and ex-lesbians further along in the healing process or completely healed.

One such ministry is Homosexuals Anonymous. Like Alcoholics Anonymous, HA is a self-supporting, self-help group that meets regularly to encourage one another in the steps of healing from homosexuality.

Earlier this year a member of our congregation and former homosexual, Earl Miller, set up such an HA group here in Allentown, Pa., with my support, the endorsement of our Eastern District Conference and a supportive board of local leaders and lay people.

One of Satan's greatest lies is that the homosexual cannot change. Experience is proving this to be absolute falsehood. People who struggle with their homosexual feelings and behavior can change—through the grace and love and power of Jesus Christ. What they need most to do so is the agape love of God experienced through Christian friends, counselors and pastors. And they need the special insights offered by ex-gay ministries—people who have been there and know the path out of the woods.

If you or someone you love is struggling with homosexuality and a desire to become free of its bondage, please write *HA Fellowship Services, Box 7881, Reading, PA 19603*, for the group nearest you. Or write *Earl Miller, LeHi Val HA, Box 491, Allentown, PA 18105*. Your request will be treated confidentially.

THE MENNONITE

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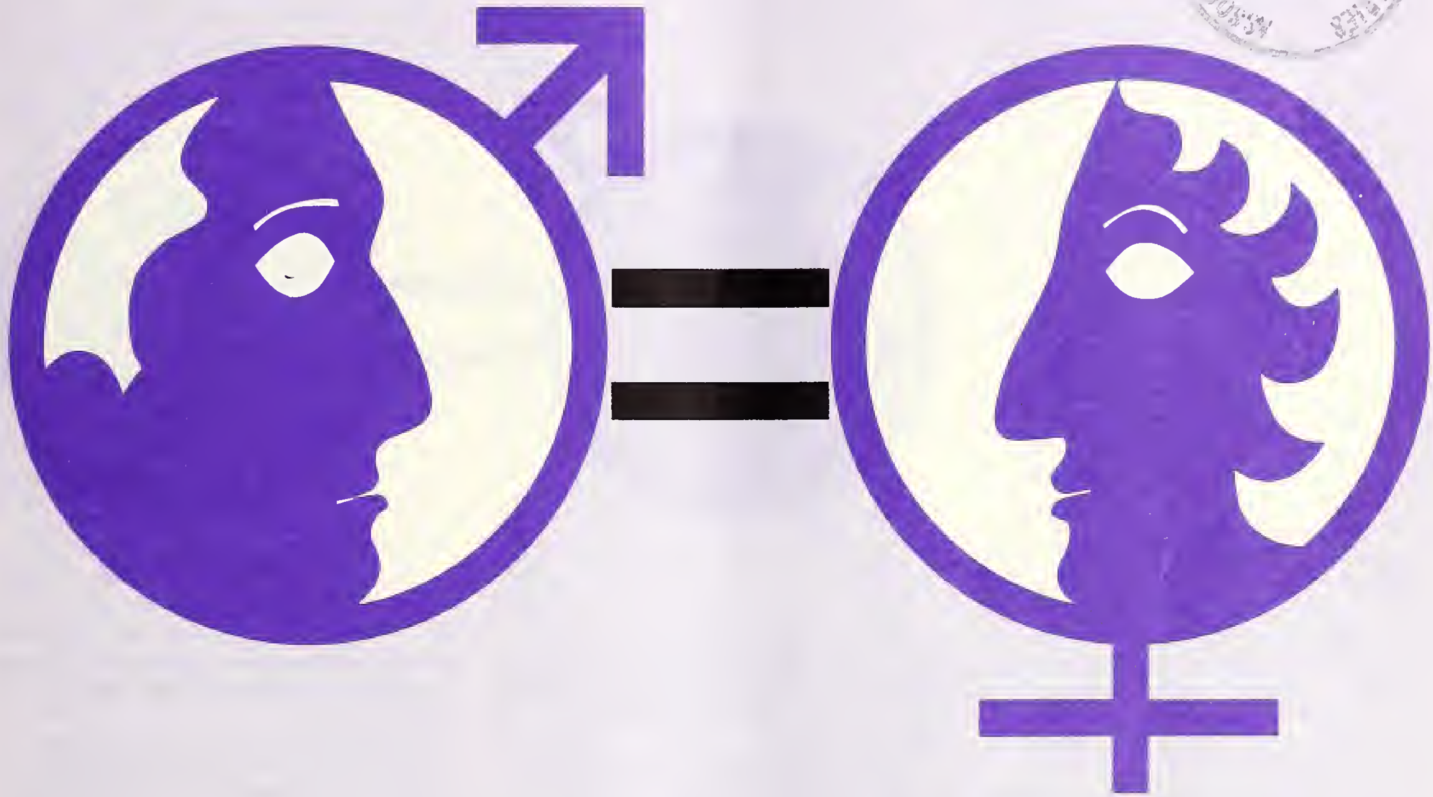


Women and leadership among GC Mennonites

Debbie Fast

We have generally accepted that both women and men have a place in the church. Great diversity of opinion emerges, however, in discussion of what that place—or those places—should be. The traditional view, held by both men and women, has been that men take leadership in the churches while women find their places in supportive, often behind-the-scenes church work. Justification is found in the Bible, e.g. 1 Corinthians 13:34, where Paul says, "The women should be silent in the churches," or in the precedent of many years, after which it's felt this is the way it should be—"It just *feels* right for men to be leaders."

There have also been other voices. And these voices gain strength and volume as more and more women—and men—see a need to move beyond stereotypes and focus on gifts and abilities, not maleness or femaleness, when choosing people for church work. This movement hasn't found it helpful to devalue the roles women have traditionally held, such as care of the nursery, preparing church dinners or teaching children's Sunday school. But it seeks to loosen the bonds of our thinking so that women and men are seen as equally valuable in leadership.

The dialogue continues. As a female theology student the issue affects me directly in my consideration of future options. As a Christian committed to seeking God's will for the church, I see the issue needing much discussion in Mennonite churches. The relevant scriptures, such as the words of Paul, have been broadly interpreted through

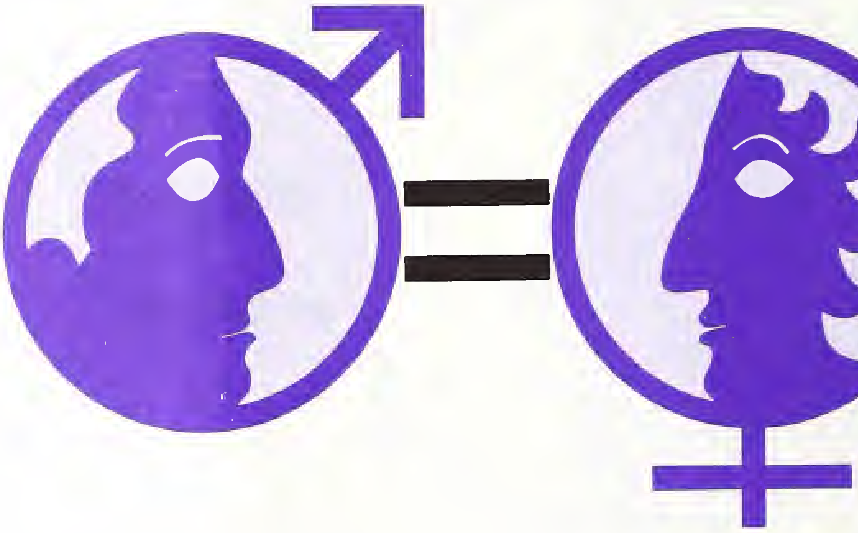
To call for women to be "submissive" does not by definition suggest that men should be "dominant." All are called to be submissive to Christ.

methods ranging from literal application to historical criticism. In light of widely diverse results, it's clear we're far from consensus, and the issue of women's roles in the church remains a live one.

In an effort to explore others' opinions and to further develop my own, I chose to do this article for *The Mennonite.* I interviewed nine representative people with a similar set of questions. Here are some of the results. Hopefully this article will stimulate greater awareness and discussion of this ongoing concern.

Not a statistical survey, the study is a dialogue among a representative group. While the nine opinions represented are limited geographically (mostly within Manitoba), hopefully enough diversity of age, position and experience exists to give at least a small window into the views of GC Mennonites. The respondents include a male administrator/teacher, a female pastor, a male pastor, a woman retired from mission work, a youth worker, a female student and three others—ranging from mid-30s to retirement—representing views of laypeople actively involved in their churches. These were asked similar questions concerning their interpretation of the Bible, their perception of what leadership is and various specific questions about women's active participation in church leadership.

The first question concerned Paul's words in 1 Corinthians about women being silent in the churches. Most strongly expressed was the opinion that verses like these need to be seen in context. We can't simply isolate a verse and develop our entire application from that one. Specific responses were that the text requires study of surrounding chapters to understand Paul's situation. We must further look at the full scope of the Bible concerning women to adequately interpret this verse. Addressing literal interpretation, one person said, "Taken literally, 1 Corinthians 14:34 wouldn't allow women to sing, repeat the Lord's prayer, tell children's stories or teach Sunday school." A candid comment was, "This was not Paul's most insightful word on the subject." Another said, "It's one *man's* opinion—not Jesus talking."



A significant number responded by saying that Paul wrote in a different era from ours, so we can't see his words here as directive for our time. Paul had to use discretion in the precariousness of the young Christian church. Other comments in this vein were that in the church, women didn't know as much; men rightly took leadership and women followed. A supporting response was that men and women of Paul's time simply viewed equality differently than we do today.

Strong affirmation was expressed for our need to look at the biblical message as a whole in seeking guidance. Our conclusions must derive from an overall perspective. For example, one pastor stressed consideration of the universal principle behind Paul's writings. His speaking of women as "submissive," for example, doesn't by definition mean men should be "dominant." The submission Paul speaks of is mutual; men and women are called to respond and interact with each other in light of their relationship to Christ.

Another look at wholistic biblical interpretation was given from the perspective of a female pastor. "The Bible creates visions of men and women as equal partners, created in God's image, given a common mission. . . . There are many strands of biblical teaching around the relationship of men and women, some descriptive, some apparently prescriptive and some clearly prophetic breakthroughs. I see the creation narrative, Jesus' relationships with women (Galatians 3:28) and the many stories of God's work in and through the lives of biblical women as normative for Christians today."

A second part to the question asked the priority given to the Bible as guidance in discerning women's roles. Most cited the Bible as their foundation—with some qualifications. Two people—a man and a woman both in leadership—focused on the need for a solid interpretive basis or principle before consulting the Bible. Both related that from their experience the problem is often a misuse of Bible references. One clear example is the quotation of verses in isolation as the basis of argument. A congregation, and the church as a whole, need to work constructively at this interpretive basis and then move—from a common perspective—to discussion.

The next question sought to find out what people perceive as leadership positions in their churches. The second part asked which were considered acceptable for women. Surprisingly, I found more variance in the perception of leadership than in views regarding women. A prevalent understanding is that leadership—in the church or other places—means having control over others. It also seems important that a person in leadership is involved in major decisions affecting the entire congregation.

A small number disagreed with this. In their view, choir directors, Sunday school teachers and committee members are leaders as well as the more obvious elder/pastoral roles. One woman (in leadership) stated, "Leadership for me constitutes facilitating group life. . . . To lead is to serve the group and God." Also cited were the many informal natural leaders who give significant guidance in congregations.

Less diversity emerged concerning positions acceptable for women. Most felt it was OK for women to hold these positions, but there were reservations. A retired missionary said she could support women as pastors only "half way"; she still felt more comfortable with men as leaders. A 20-year-old student said she couldn't wholeheartedly support women as pastors because of biblical directives against it. A surprising corollary to me was that women, as often or more than men, seem to have strong feelings against women as leaders.

Another question dealt with women in mission and the transition taking place from that type of leadership to church work at home. Most gave positive responses to women's leadership in mission, and many cited specific examples to support this. Some caution was expressed against placing women in leadership in a culture where this isn't acceptable. Another response was an affirmation of women in mission but that there is much work to be done at home.

Asked to compare women's leadership in mission and in home churches, most viewed them as equally valid. The general response was that no differentiation should be made between the two, allowing for inevitable cultural adjustment. In other words, a woman qualified for leadership in mission should be considered equally qualified for leadership at home. One missionary recalled a painful experience of not being allowed to speak from the pulpit of her church when home on furlough. Another person remembered missionary couples coming to their church, and the woman gave a "report" while the man gave a "sermon."

An interesting comment, given by a retired man, balanced the discussion, however. He agreed that a difference in evaluation exists but said the same thing happens to men. Often their leadership in mission is also not well accepted or seen as valuable when they return home.

So it's not only women who feel a lack of acceptance for their leadership, but perhaps women feel it more acutely. One pastor said, "It's a question of geography; when it's far away it's safe and OK."

The last question asked if men and women function differently as leaders in the same positions and if an inherent or learned difference creates more or less ability. Almost all said they found more differences between people than between men and women. Individual gifts and personalities are more important than gender in determining leadership capabilities.

In spite of this generalizing, all spoke of specific male and female qualities brought to leadership. Women are seen as more sensitive than men and as having nurturing and caring gifts. Women tend to be intuitive and definitely more diplomatic (one pastor said women are concerned with relationships rather than principles). When speaking of commanding authority and respect, respondents said this generation still tends to give more respect to men.

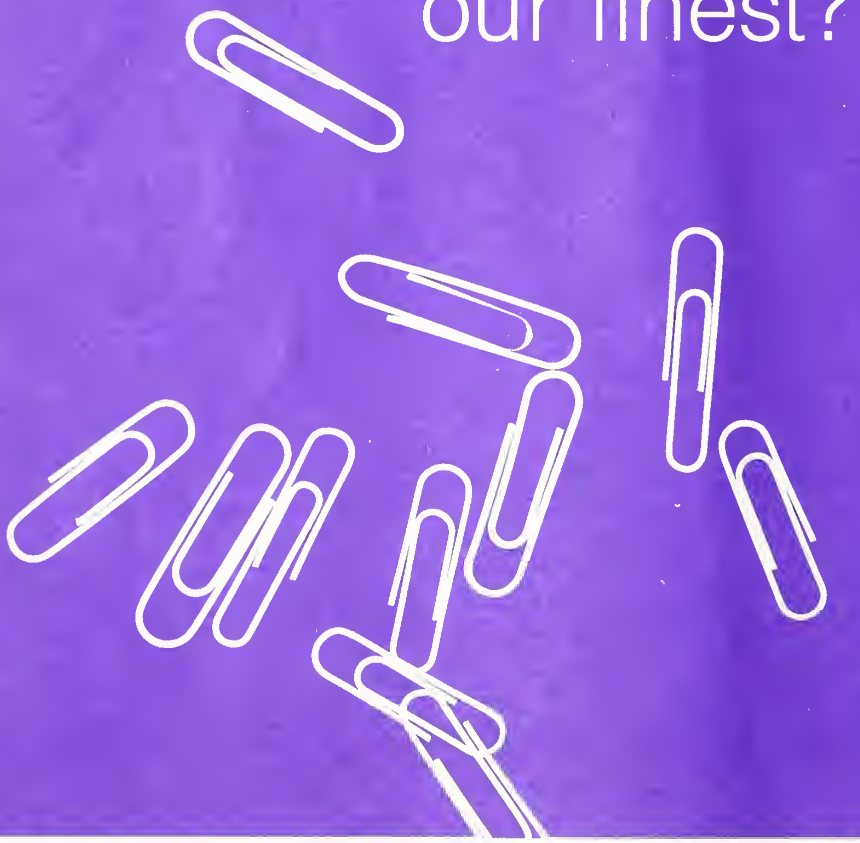
In response to what affects leadership qualifications, certain trends emerged. All felt that bearing and raising children places great demands on a woman and that this has implications for her leadership role. A woman can't devote herself to full-time pastoral work and care for a young family (this assumes her husband works full time). When speaking of priorities they almost unanimously said that family comes first. A less polemical response was "marriage/childbearing/childrearing definitely still affects women's energies more than men's and keeps them from being as single-minded about most aspects of life outside the home."

Many commented that the experience of motherhood has definite assets in church leadership; characteristics of good mothers are often also those of good church leaders. These assets—nurturing, patience, sensitivity to other parents in the congregation—are not exclusively female, but women tend to cultivate them.

Summary. I cite three special and encouraging statements in conclusion. First from a retired man who said, "As times change, attitudes will also change." Secondly a woman in lay leadership: "It's not only the men who have a calling to church leadership." And thirdly from a female pastor: "Women as leadership models bring newness and freshness to the church."

I am well aware that this dialogue only scratches the surface of the greater discussion of women's emerging roles in the church. There are excellent publications, such as the MCC Committee on Women's Concerns' *Report*, which works with the issue on an ongoing basis. And the discussion continues to be common on many levels within our conferences, churches and in our educational institutions. But hopefully this scratching and the views shared here will play a small part in stimulating further dialogue and in motivating positive change. •

Are we silencing our finest?



Will D. Campbell

After the spring thaw of 1573, a woman prayed for her children: "O holy Father, sanctify the children of thy handmaiden in thy truth, and keep them from all unrighteousness, for thy holy name's sake. O Almighty Father, I commend them unto you, since they are thy creatures; care for them, for they are thy handiwork; so that they may walk in thy paths."

She was a cousin to some of us. Her name was Maeyken Wens, an Anabaptist woman of Antwerp, who had been arrested a few days earlier for proclaiming the gospel of Christ as she understood it from her personal reading of the Scripture and from study and discussion of it with others of her sisters and brothers.

Cousin Maeyken withstood the inquisition of ecclesiastics and bodily torture of those in civil authority. When she would not recant after six months of imprisonment and would not promise to cease her spreading of the Word, she was sentenced on Oct. 5 to death. Included in the sentence read by the court was the instruction to the executioner that her tongue should be screwed fast to the roof of her mouth so that she might not testify along the way to the place of burning.

The next day her teenage son, Adriaen, took his youngest little brother, 3-year-old Hans Mattheus, and stood on a bench near the stakes so that her first and last issue might be present at the moment of her death. When it began, Adriaen fainted and was not able to witness her parting. But when it was over and the ashes had cooled, he sifted through them and found the screw with which her tongue had been stilled. Three other women and a man died that day for the same offense. The remembrance of them makes me exult in my heritage.

Four hundred eleven years later, on June 13, 1984, many thousands of Maeyken's spiritual relatives gathered in convention in Kansas City and resolved that women should not be ordained as ministers:

> "WHEREAS, while Paul commends women and men alike in other roles of ministry and service (Titus 2:1-10) he excludes women from pastoral leadership (1 Timothy 2:12) to preserve a submission God requires

Yesteryear's prophets were silenced with tongue screws. In today's sophisticated world we do it with paper clips (needed to hold together the reams of paperwork for building convenient resolutions).

> because the man was first in Creation and the woman was first in the Edenic fall" (1 Timothy 2:13ff). *Resolution passed by Southern Baptist Convention*

The remembrance of that act brings no exultation to many of us who wear the Anabaptist alias, Baptist. I have heard of no 15-year-old sons picking up the paper clips from the discarded resolutions that recommended the silencing of their mothers. Perhaps it is just as well. For that resolution will no more stop their mothers and sisters from declaring the mighty acts of God, with or without the laying on of human hands, than the tongue screws stopped those daughters of Sarah in the 16th century. Or my Mississippi grandmother, who in 1932, and with no apostolic sanction, stood in the finest prophetic and priestly tradition and said to an angry group of men about to beat a black child with a gin belt, "He's 14 years old and you ain't gonna beat him." And they didn't. Again, I exult.

Many, it should be said, deny the kinship between contemporary Baptists and that tough and radical little band of left-wingers called Anabaptists. But increasingly the scholars acknowledge and affirm the nexus. Among them are William Estep of the Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; Eric Gritch of Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, Pa., the late Roland Bainton of Yale, and Donald Armentrout of St. Luke's Episcopal Seminary.

About a year ago I sat in a hot and crowded courtroom in Glasgow, Ky., and watched the continuing persecution of Maeyken Wen's people. A young *Swartzentruber* Amish man was on trial for not having the state-mandated red emblem on his buggy. To do so, he testified calmly, would be a sin. To him it would be a violation of the second commandment, and he made it clear that he had no intention of doing so. He refused the oath, refused to hold his right hand up in obeisance to a court of human law, declined to say, "Your honor" or to respond in any fashion other than the biblical yea or nay. There was no talk of racks, drowning or burning. But the suspicion of the state of those who dare to be different was much in evidence. Testimony showed that the buggy, with the reflective tape designed by the Amish, could be seen at night for almost 600 feet. The issue did not appear to be safety. The issue was Caesar's prescribed emblem. I observed this tiny vestige of where I came from with gratefulness.

One week before that courtroom scene 45,000 Baptists convened in Dallas in an atmosphere of shame and held a four-day shouting match over which faction of the denomination, the conservatives or the slightly more conservative, should be entrusted with the tattered coat of Christ. The duly ordained reverend president was flanked by armed guards. They were not country dunces riding into the city on their watermelon truck to fight over who would get their picture on next year's Sunday school quarterlies. Baptists are now a middle-class and accepted people. The preachers of the victorious faction, largely unaware and uncaring of their antecedent, preach from Hebrew and Greek texts. The laity come from the professional elite, the major protagonist being a prominent Houston judge. (In the days of Maeyken Wens he would not have been allowed membership by virtue of being a magistrate. In 1985 he lobbied on the Phil Donahue Show to take it over.)

Though there is considerable opposition to the resolution on the ordination of women passed by 58 percent of those voting a year ago, the effort to rescind it did not make it to the 1985 agenda. To preserve the spirit of alleged harmony, women are still adjudged unqualified to be ministers because they discovered sin first. One might think that since they have been at it longer they would be more competent in identifying and casting it out. But logic has never carried much weight where mischief and foolishness reign.

The percentage of women clergy in my holy mother church is less than one percent. But if those who did not spring from the left wing of the Reformation are looking down their sophisticated noses at backwater Baptists and are gathering boulders, they might first consider some relevant mote. Among Episcopalians and United Methodists the ratio is about 30-to-1. And among Roman Catholics it is . . . well, never mind.

All of us might also hear some words of Kenneth Chafin, a Baptist seminary professor known for neither toadying to special interests nor knee-jerk liberalism, words of both warning and hope. They should be heard by Nashville, Rome, Canterbury and the rest: "The best students I have at Southern Baptist Seminary are women. They've got better minds and better backgrounds. They are better at preparing sermons than anyone else I have in the class. And yet the most ill-prepared, uncommitted, limited man I have has a better chance for ministry in our denomination than some of the most brilliant people I teach. Until the pulpits of this land begin to deal with that, we are wasting not just half of our gifts, we are wasting probably 60 percent of our gifts."

There are today almost 60,000 students involved in some theological degree program—25 percent of them are women. Where will they go? The number being trained is multiples beyond the number of professional jobs currently open to them.

Of personal concern to me in all this is that my first-born daughter entered divinity school last fall. I don't want her bruised by institutionalized tongue screws or silenced by resoluted bigotry.

Of concern to the steeples should be some words of Paul: ". . . and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?"

Will D. Campbell was ordained as a Baptist minister 46 years ago. His article is reprinted by permission and copyrighted by Christianity and Crisis, *Sept. 16, 1985, issue, 537 W. 121 St., New York, NY 10027.*

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Women are coming into their own

Victor C. Seibert

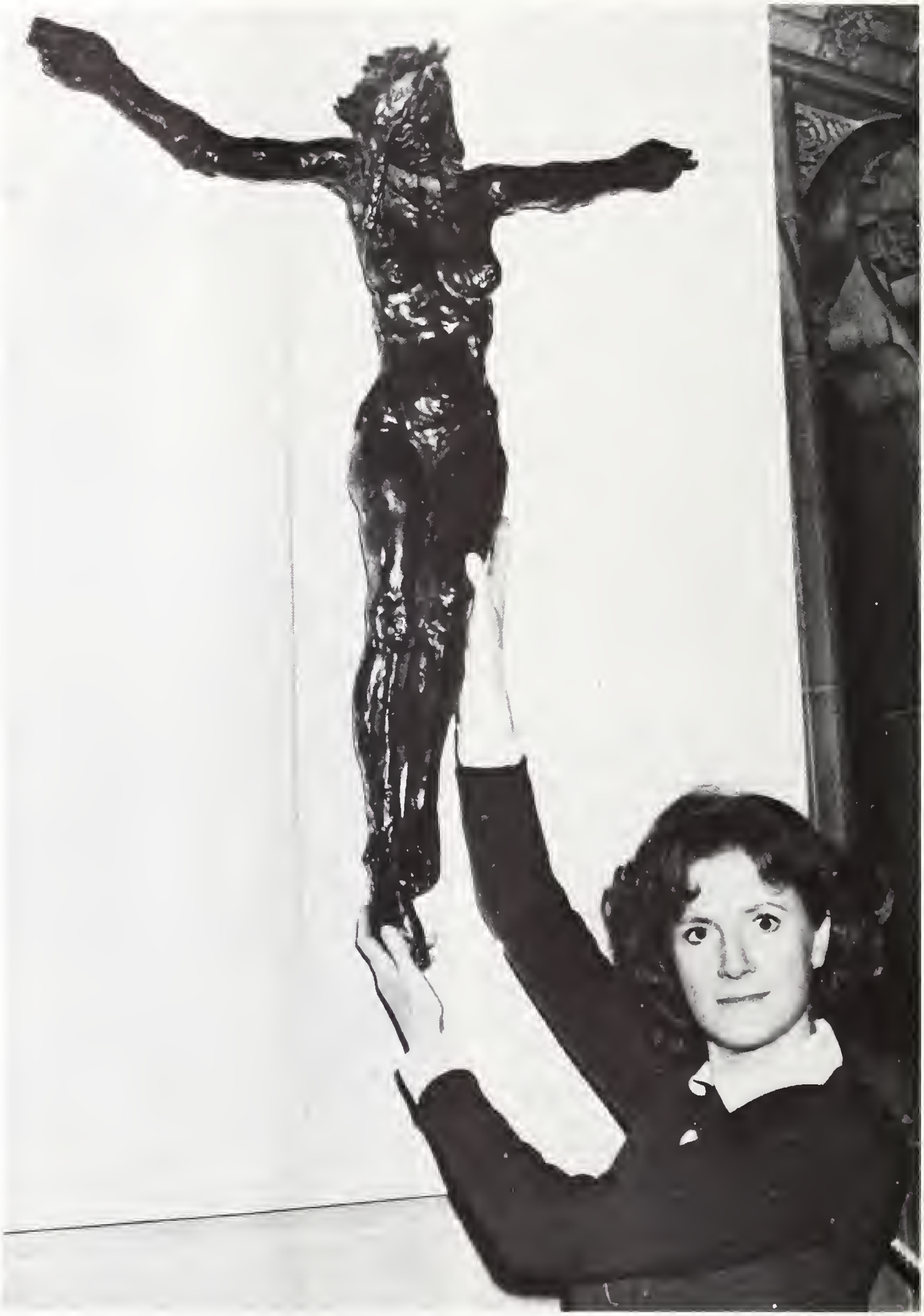
No other mass of humanity has made the progress that women have made in the last 50 years. This progress is evident in all societies, regardless of color, creed, economic status, politics, education, moral standards or culture. Since the earliest recorded history, a woman was considered inferior to a man. It was expected that her entire lifestyle was to be closely related and limited to the upbringing of her brood. She did not rule, did not advise, did not contribute to economic status, did not participate in military actions, did not enter the job markets and did not receive the recognition a man did. Even such great religious documents as the Bible or the Koran fail to mention or even predict the liberation of women.

But the last 50 years have brought about phenomenal change. Women are now about equaling men in numbers employed. They are entering the latest labor markets formerly reserved for men. For example, the Russian cosmonaut Svetlana Savitskya recently not only entered space for the second time but walked in space for over three hours, during which time she welded, soldered and cut metal—jobs that only a few short years ago were definitely reserved for man.

Women have proved that they are not the puny, sickly creatures with which they were formerly tagged. Today they have proved that they are tougher and more enduring than their counterparts. On the average, they live more than five years longer than men.

So we have to conclude that the great masterpieces of writing were wrong in predicting and prophesying that women were not equal to men. Today we have seen only the beginning of the eventual feats that women of the future will achieve. It is not impossible to think that the world someday will see women able to guide nations on a friendly, cooperative basis and to economically manage nations to a level where there will be no extremely rich or lowly poor, to regulate social standards to eliminate racial feuding, to regulate health to eliminate pestilence and incurable diseases and biologically regulate the population in accordance with the earth's capabilities to produce food.

Truly in the past 50 years women have broken loose from their bonds in which they were tightly bound by men since the beginning of time.



Artist Edwina Sandys (bottom right) did this sculpture of Jesus as a woman. When it was put on display at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, the response was overwhelmingly positive, according to James Park Morton, rector of the cathedral.

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Restore us, O Lord—Lamentations 5

Monty Ledford

Chapter 5 is the depressing prayer of a later generation (v. 3, 7), a generation which has known subsistence living in its impoverished land as a permanent way of life. It is a chilling view of the aftermath of war and judgment.

Strangers now own the Jews' inalienable inheritance (v. 2). An entire generation has grown up without fathers (v. 3). It's a huge catastrophe for society, as we can see in our day in Uganda after Amin and in our inner cities. The land of milk and honey provides only the bare necessities for exorbitant prices (v. 4), like the Ukraine after the Russian revolution. The dregs and turncoats rule with a harshness born of envy and vindictiveness (v. 8); and, always and ever, hunger (vv. 4, 6, 9, 10) is the constant companion of poverty and oppression. It is hard for us to really know how important food is. Maybe we should vote on our family and church contributions to relief of hunger only after an all-church 24-hour fast.

The fabric of society has disintegrated. For all the sins and faults of the United States, its government has provided a truly remarkable long-term stability in which the human story can develop at some leisure. What a horrible place is a land where women have no security (v. 11), where there is no respect for age or authority (v. 12), where carefree childhood is unknown (v. 13), where there is no hope for a fair trial (v. 14—the "city gate" was town hall), where community celebrations are a thing of the past (v. 15).

The worst thing is that God has abandoned his temple (v. 18). This impressive 45-foot-high edifice on the heights of the city had been the first sight of the Jerusalemite at dawn and his last sight at dusk. Its broken and blackened facade is now the haunt of jackals, God's unmistakable signal that he is gone.

There is some hope in the final four verses of this final chapter, but it is a mixed bag. There is the remarkable realization that, while God's temple may lie in ruins, his throne remains unshaken:

"Though earth and man were gone
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee."

A lofty and noble truth, no doubt, but not too warm or nourishing to a skinny and shivering soul. So our survivor cannot suppress a complaint: "Why do you always forget us?"

Never be embarrassed at hurling complaints toward God. None of the Bible characters were shy about this. And why? Because although complaints would be impertinent or irrelevant to the Absolute Ground of Being or the philosophers' Unmoved Mover, they are an entirely valid claim upon a God who has bound himself by his promises and his covenant to a people whom he knew to be sinful when he chose them. For better or for worse he took us, and for better or worse we can expect him not to forsake us. This is the strength of the poet's appeal.

And yet . . . and yet . . . the little flame of hope, the spunk of faith, almost flickers out again in the final verse. The reality he can see seems to eclipse the promise he holds on to with teeth and toenails. I have read that the synagogue reading of *Lamentations* repeats verse 21 after verse 22. That would be our tendency too, but that is not the way the text is written. Of course, we know of the return from exile and the even greater return from the exile of death that another God-forsaken man experienced, so verse 22 is not the final word of God to his people. But it does have a haunting forsakenness that we would do well not to homogenize into our sure and certain hope. Until the Last Day, verse 22 will remind us to listen to the heart's cry of the world. *Last in a series on Lamentations*

Monty Ledford, 11 Dean N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505, is pastor at North Park Mennonite Church.

Almost . . . the light wants to go out. But the darkness cannot overcome it. It shines on.

Nineteen churches apply for GC members

The following churches have applied and are being recommended by the General Board for membership in the General Conference. The delegate body will vote on the acceptance of these congregations on July 21.

Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church developed from a group meeting biweekly. In September 1984, with the support of the home mission committee of the Western District Conference, Marilyn Miller became pastor/midwife. In October 1984 the group decided to purchase the Center for United Ministries building on the University of Colorado campus. The membership is 43, and attendance ranges from 30 to 50. The church joined the WDC in 1985.

Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster, Pa., began as a small church-planting group sponsored by the Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church. Organizational meetings began in September 1984, and the group began worshiping together in January 1985. The group operates on lay leadership, though it is seeking pastoral leadership. Its membership is 62, and the attendance is 80-90. It is also seeking to join the Mennonite Church.

Hillcrest Mennonite Church, Grande Prairie, Alta., began 24 years ago. It operates the Hillcrest Centre, which includes a live-in counseling ministry, a day-care center and a school teaching grades 1-12. Its membership is 41.

Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan., began when Marvin and Jeannie Zehr accepted the call of the home mission committee of the Western District Conference to begin a new church in Wichita. First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., agreed to be a sponsoring congregation. Small groups began on Feb. 3, 1985. On April 4, 1985, four small groups met together. After a church retreat, the first service was held May 19, 1985, at an elementary school. The first official meeting of the congregation was Oct. 6, 1985. The membership is 58, and attendance averages 75.

Houston Chinese Mennonite Church began worship services in February 1983. The congregation now has regular Sunday school and worship services, Monday English Bible study, Wednesday prayer meeting and Chinese Bible study, and home meetings. Ten families attend the church, which joined Western District Conference.

Jubilee Mennonite Church, Swift Current, Sask., began in September 1984 as a church-planting effort of Zion Mennonite Church in Swift Current. The founding service was held June 2, 1985. A steering committee of three gives overall leadership. The membership is 22, while attendance is 55-60.

Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church was developed in the mid-1970s by the missions committee of the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta. The church was organized in January 1978. Nick Dyck served as pastor from 1978-80, and Ernie Sawatsky has served as pastor since 1980. The membership is 51.

Manor Community Church, Chicago, is the result of a church-planting effort by Gary Martin with funding from the Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church and from the Central District Conference. It was formally organized on Aug. 26, 1984. Two co-pastors, one intern and five lay people make up a church council. The church belongs to the Illinois Conference and the CDC. Its membership of 20 is 65 percent Anglo and 35 percent non-Anglo.

Mennonite Covenant Fellowship, Clackamas, Ore., began as a Bible study group in the fall of 1982. The charter service was held Jan. 22, 1984. In June 1984 the group joined the Pacific District Conference. Wendell and Judy Unrau began a half-time pastoral position in July 1985. The membership is 14.

Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal began in 1971 as a small group of English-speaking Mennonites who met once a month in homes. Members met regularly for worship beginning in the fall of 1975. Its charter service was held in the spring of 1978. In 1980 the fellowship joined the Mennonite Conference of Ontario and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Robert and Deborah Martin-Koop were commissioned as a pastoral team later that year. The membership is 33.

Mennonite Fellowship of Rosthern, Sask., began meeting informally in September 1983. Worship services began in January 1984. The fellowship joined the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada in 1985. The membership is 31.

Paoli (Ind.) Mennonite Fellowship began as a small house fellowship in late 1974. The construction of a meetinghouse is being planned. Tom Kauffman has served as pastor since 1977. The church has a shared leadership that meets weekly, while the congregation meets monthly for decision making by consensus. There are about 120 participants.

Peace Mennonite Church, Regina, Sask., began meeting Feb. 3, 1985, and began Sunday morning services last September. The church was formerly organized Jan. 12. It was formed from the effort of Grace Mennonite Church in Regina. It has joined the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The membership is 20.

Peoria-North Mennonite Church, Peoria, Ill., held its first worship service Feb. 12, 1984. This followed a year-long Bible study by about 10 adults. One of the congregation's main goals is to reach people not being effectively reached by other churches. The pastor is Ryan Ahlgrim. The membership is 12.

Portage Mennonite Church, Portage la Prairie, Man., began in 1977 when six families agreed to meet and plan their own worship services. The church organization includes one church chairperson and four coordinators who focus on worship, education, missions and finance. The membership is 40.

San Antonio (Texas) Mennonite Fellowship began meeting in February 1982. In July 1983 Dan Rheinheimer became pastor. The congregation sponsored a voluntary service unit that year. In 1984 it joined the South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church and the Western District Conference. Average attendance is 70, and the membership is 28.

Saskatoon Chinese Mennonite Church began as a church planting project of the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan, the Mennonite

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Brethren of Saskatchewan and Mennonite Central Committee (Saskatchewan). David Chiu came in November 1982 as the church planter. The first worship service was held Oct. 23, 1983. Average attendance is 50, and the membership is 26.

Sterling Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, began as a mission in a community hall in St. Vital, mainly under the leadership of Canadian Mennonite Bible College students. A church basement was built in 1953 on Sterling Avenue. In 1957, when the entire structure was completed, the congregation joined the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Two further changes of location occurred in 1970 and in 1981. Erwin and Laura Wiebe now serve as pastors. The membership is 75.

Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary, was organized out of a committee of representatives from the three other GC churches in Calgary in 1983. Twenty families (12 from First Mennonite Church, eight from Foothills Mennonite Church) formed the original group. The pastor is Herman Walde. The membership is 47.

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Your prayer and financial support for the Commission on Education are appreciated and necessary to continue this and other ministries for the church.

This ACT weekend event is sponsored by the following: The *Commission on Education*, the *Education and Publishing Committee, Eastern District*, and *Mennonite Biblical Seminary*; the *Nurture Commission* of the Franconia Mennonite Conference; *Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries* and *Mennonite Board of Missions*. For more information, please contact the address below.

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Church

Commission on Education

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Growing churches are more loving—to each other and to visitors—than declining churches. According to research conducted by the Institute for American Church Growth, members of growing churches reported both giving and experiencing more love and caring than members of declining churches. The research also discovered a correlation between an entire denomination's "love ability" and its membership growth or decline.

Helping poor people in Bangladesh is difficult. The obstacles they face seem insurmountable. Fifty percent are landless and so cannot produce food for their families' survival. Many must work as day laborers in a labor market already saturated, since 100 million live there in a country the size of Wisconsin. To help some of them, Mennonite Central Committee operates a Rural Savings Program in and around Feni. The program encourages the poor to work together and pool their resources. Today there are 55 cooperative groups with 635 members. The total savings of these groups is 255,000 takas (about $8,000 U.S.).

NEWS

Historic meeting with Franconia Conference

Eastern District concentrates on conciliation

Bedminster, Pa.—Deep Run Church East hosted the 188th session of the Eastern District Conference here May 1-3. Twenty-nine congregations comprise this conference.

Incarnating their theme, "When Christians Disagree: Skills and Concepts in Conflict Management," the gathering moved across the road for the Friday night session. Here at Deep Run Church West (a member of the Mennonite Church), nine projects were reported on—describing the education and nurture points of cooperation between the Eastern District Conference and the Franconia Conference. The two groups, which split over doctrinal differences in 1847, have sat together for musical and other events, but this was the first shared business session.

Shared projects include Mennonite Marriage Encounter, Keystone Bible Institute, the Germantown Corporation, Indian Creek Foundation (serving 44 mentally handicapped adults) and Eastern Pennsylvania Mediation Services.

Ron Kraybill (Leola, Pa.), director of Mennonite Central Committee's Conciliation Service, spoke three times during the weekend on problem solving. "The way we handle conflict as congregations affects the way we do the mission that Jesus has given us. God does not withdraw from us during times of conflict. Rather, conflict can be the arena of revelation (as when the final biblical canon was decided in the fourth century)." Kraybill encouraged his listeners to "wonder what God is going to say to us this time" rather than dreading conflict.

Role-playing, skillfully directed by Art Isaak of the program committee, facilitated the subject at hand.

The conference mourned the loss of 106 members during the year, but rejoiced that Sunday school enrollment had jumped by 423 people.

A revised constitution, over which representatives had labored for a day last November at Lower Skippack Church, was adopted. Changes are subtle. The word "autonomous" appears more frequently but with a last-minute added reminder that congregations are also part of larger bodies of believers. The term "elder" is now rendered "senior pastor."

A major increase in the budget is the salary of new youth worker Randy Keeler. This promises to answer the longing expressed by young Greg Linberger that the youth groups have more contact. Irwin Richert encouraged congregations to give delegate status to some young people for conference sessions.

With 18 of the 29 churches contributing 100 percent or more of their "fair share," 79.4 percent of the budget was in when the books closed. Several delegates scurried to turn in the miniscule amounts needed to bring their apportionment to 100 percent. A budget of $175,000 was adopted for 1986-87, an increase of 11.6 percent.

Ruth Hunsberger of Crossroads Community Center

Seminary-level courses for credit will be offered in eastern Pennsylvania from Mennonite Biblical Seminary starting in October. C. J. Dyck is scheduled to teach Anabaptist history and theology. (To report on the seminary, retiring J. Herbert Fretz had come back to the place of his origins—

American soldiers stationed at U.S. military bases in North Carolina have taken part in rallies and other activities of a Ku Klux Klan-related white supremacist paramilitary organization, according to police officials and a group that monitors Klan activities. The Southern Poverty Law Center said it had photographs of military personnel at White Patriot Party functions, including one that shows U.S. soldiers standing beside a sign that says, "KKK rally. No Jews Allowed." Morris Dees, head of the center, said the soldiers' activities raise serious questions about the WPP's access to explosives and weapons from U.S. camps.

Chad is in the midst of civil war. In the capital city, N'Djamena, the fighting has left some homes so damaged that families are unable to live there. The Chadian Comite de Soutien, an interchurch relief committee, initiated a reconstruction project to address the needs of homeless Chadians. More than 700 families in N'Djamena received Mennonite Central Committee roofing kits to repair their homes. The kits included nails, wooden beams and corrugated tin sheets large enough to cover a large room.

Mennonite Men of the General Conference are gearing up for increased activity. A proposal will be submitted at the triennial sessions in Saskatoon in July for beginning part-time staff. Mennonite Men, with local groups in five U.S. districts and in Canada, has through its Tenth Man program provided start-up funds to new congregations for their buildings.

From left: Ray Linberger, Orlando Johnson and Carlton Minnis confer.

Deep Run.) Along this line, the district will help host the first Aid to Christian Teaching weekend, an inter-Mennonite event, in September.

Carlton Minnis, pastor of Second Mennonite Church in Philadelphia, praised the work of Ruth Hunsberger at Crossroads Community Center, a major outreach of the district's congregations. In the past year Crossroads provided social services, a prison ministry, youth services, a boys' basketball team, tutoring, story and garden clubs, and open-air evangelistic meetings.

A counterpart to the conference schedule provided attention to the district's ongoing interest in human sexuality: Films and documentaries about abortion and homosexuality were shown during break times. The delegates also agreed to have a representative on the board of Homosexuals Anonymous.

Other matters included the following: Considerable time was spent deciding whether or not to harvest some big trees at Camp Men-O-Lan. The (quarterly) *Eastern District Messenger* editor expressed willingness to incorporate church newsletters in order to cut local church costs. But a Development Fund Drive suggestion to computerize the *Messenger*'s address system failed to pass. Also the delegate body had a spontaneous prayer time for victims of the nuclear accident near Kiev, U.S.S.R.; empathy was evident, since this area in eastern Pennsylvania is veritably sandwiched between the Three Mile Island and Limerick nuclear power plants.

Leon Martin, pastor of the hosting congregation, will succeed David Bartow as president of the district. John Bleam was elected vice president.
Muriel T. Stackley

Lynn Keenan resigns MVS position

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Lynn Keenan, associate director of Mennonite Voluntary Service for the western United States, has resigned her position effective July 27. Based in Denver, Keenan administers 15 service units in Washington, California, Arizona, Colorado, Kansas and Oklahoma. She has held that position since September 1981.

Prior to taking the directorship, she was a member of Mennonite Voluntary Service and served in Denver. She is originally from Fountain Valley, Calif., and is a graduate of Westmont College in Santa Barbara, Calif.

Her plans include graduate study in social work at Colorado State University, Fort Collins.

Our home is open for **bed and breakfast during Expo '86**. The rates are $35 per couple per night. No smokers or small children, please. Easy access to Expo.

Write or phone:
John and Mary Klassen
4054-196th St.
Langley, BC V3A 1A1
(604) 534-8708.

Because of the generous support from nearly 100 congregations, the first Chicago Mennonite Festival and Sale last July raised over $20,000 for the church's work in Chicago. The second festival and sale will be held July 12 at the Holy Trinity High School, 1443 West Division Street in Chicago. For more information contact LeRoy Kennel at 18 W. 757 22nd St., Lombard, IL 60148, (312) 620-2306.

Youth gathered in São Paulo, Brazil, for a retreat during Carnaval days Feb. 8-11. Nearly 30 participants heard Ireno Vieira, pastor of the Mennonite church in a suburb of Curitiba, speak on the fruitfulness in the life of Christians. Gary Loewen, General Conference Mennonite missionary from Campinas, shared his personal pilgrimage in accepting the Lord and his call to the ministry. After he spoke, seven youth committed their lives to the Lord as they knelt around the campfire.

Mary Kay Larson, Mennonite Ministries worker in Botswana, was one of four people who has coauthored *Botswana Family Health Survey*. As senior officer of the Maternal Child Health/Family Planning unit, Larson was the technical director for the survey. The main purpose of the survey was to collect basic health and family planning data needed for evaluating MCH/FP activities in Botswana. Findings include the fact that half the mothers will have experienced the death of at least one child by the time they reach the end of their child-bearing years.

Peace assembly focuses on 'Confessing Church in America'

Wichita, Kan. (MCC U.S.)—"If, in this time of crisis, we say no to idolatrous national policies and yes to Jesus Christ as the only prince of peace, God will gather and renew the church to join in God's loving action to save the world."

These words were part of a short message from participants at the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section Assembly on "The Confessing Church in America." The April 25-26 meeting was hosted by the Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church here.

The assembly opened Friday night with a lecture by George Hunsinger, theology professor at Bangor (Maine) Theological Seminary on "Where the Battle Rages: Confessing Christ in America Today."

Hunsinger stressed that loyalty to Christ is only concrete when a Christian must face persecution and suffering for having confessed Christ.

Hunsinger said nuclear weapons are the ultimate expression of evil in today's world, especially because of their non-selective destruction. He reminded the group that until America entered World War II it had strongly condemned the bombing of civilian targets.

Hunsinger called for a return to the "confessing church," in which members practice "maximum fidelity" to Scripture, even if this position puts it in conflict with the larger society.

The Saturday session began with L. William Yolton, director of the National Inter-Religious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO), Washington, addressing the assembly on "Touched in the Hollow of the Thigh: Conscientious Objection in the Nuclear Age."

Yolton noted that early church opposition to military service was directed against the idolatry of the Roman army rather than against killing. He briefly traced the changing nature of war since Roman times, emphasizing the gradual shift away from a clear to no clear distinction between the killing of soldiers and civilians.

Like Hunsinger, Yolton sees nuclear weapons as the epitome of humanity's new attitude toward war and as a chief target for Christian pacifists today.

He urged the church to move beyond conscientious objection to conscientious participation in active witnessing against military evils. "Christian compassion for others," he stressed, "is our common ground for working together for Jesus."

In the afternoon session discussion moved from the theoretical to the practical as Ruth Stoltzfus Jost, a lawyer from Columbus, Ohio, spoke on "Sanctuary: Who is Disobeying the Law?"

Jost introduced the sanctuary movement, which gives support to political refugees from Central America, as a unique program that is church based but politically oriented.

Jost contends that the U.S. government is breaking the law, not the sanctuary workers. She explained that the United States is bound by international law and the 1980 Refugee Act to guarantee safety to civilians fleeing armed conflict in their homelands or who have a well-founded fear of persecution if they return home.

Instead the United States denies most Central American refugees official refugee status and attempts to deport them to their native countries. Jost linked this policy with U.S. government support of the governments from which the refugees flee.

The assembly's final speaker was Peter Ediger, pastor at Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, who spoke on "The Confessing Church in the Acts of the Apostles." He paraphrased selected material from Acts to demonstrate that the early church as described in Acts is the original confessing church."

John Stoner, left, executive secretary of MCC U.S. Peace Section, and Bill Price, center, talk with speaker George Hunsinger.

He also called for the church to ignore political consequences and engage in more active witnessing against the injustice symbolized by nuclear weapons, noting Mennonites' tremendous energy potential as seen in recent relief sale efforts and the 500 Mennonite Men's Choir.

The assembly also worked in eight small discussion groups. Saturday morning the small groups tested a proposition that "the conscription of hearts and minds for support of unconscionable national policies must become a subject for preaching, study, discussion and action by local congregations if the church is to give a faithful witness to Jesus Christ in our time."

Over 70 people registered for the assembly, which was organized by MCC U.S. Peace Section. The U.S. Peace Section meets twice yearly and holds a public assembly approximately every 18 months. The next peace assembly is projected for the fall of 1987.
David Sprunger

Thy
Kingdom
Come

Saskatoon '86

TRIENNIAL REPORTS: GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH

"Thy kingdom come" we will be praying together in the Field House in Saskatoon from July 21-27.

"Thy kingdom come" is the prayer of delegates as they anticipate making decisions that will shape our conference for the coming three years, 1986-89, and beyond.

"Thy kingdom come" is the prayer of conference employees as they do the work assigned to them.

Here are the reports of that work in God's kingdom for the last three years, 1983-86. Our tasks span education, home ministries, overseas mission, seminary education and women in mission. Included is an accounting of the way those tasks are administrated and how our dollars are spent.

These reports, besides being inserted in *The Mennonite*, will be bound in the workbook given to delegates and visitors at the sessions in Saskatoon. If you are unable to be there, please share your concerns, ideas and questions with the delegate(s) from your congregation who will be coming to Saskatoon, or write to General Secretary Vern Preheim, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Muriel T. Stackley, editor

General Board

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:19, RSV). Many new things happened in the last three years. We put an emphasis on dialogue and unity while maintaining a strong outreach in mission and service in the local congregation, North America and around the globe. The dialogues on faith (1984) and on biblical interpretation (1985) were attempts to seek and maintain the unity which we have in Jesus Christ. The 40 listening meetings known as Dialogue '85 were an effort to listen very carefully to what our people are saying about the work of the conferences. In that process, we also received a new reading on the felt needs which deserve attention in the coming years.

In an effort to improve communication, *In Touch*, a quarterly information piece, was launched; several slide sets were produced.

Purpose and Goals One of the more significant achievements of the triennium was the General Board giving us a new reading of the General Conference purpose, goals and objectives in which the purpose as already stated in the constitution was reaffirmed: "The General Conference Mennonite Church is a fellowship of congregations committed to proclaim Jesus Christ

The General Board in session at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., in March 1986.

through appropriate ministries (such as evangelism, missions, education, literature, service, relief, and community development) throughout the world to the end that persons may put their trust in God and receive Jesus Christ as Savior from the guilt and power of sin and serve him as Lord in the fellowship of the church; to assist congregations in Christian worship, nurture and witness; and together to understand more adequately the essence of the Christian faith and to accept its implications for total living. To evangelize, to teach biblical principles, to develop and train leaders and to maintain unity are the four goals the General Board identified as the overall General Conference goals for the next three to six years.

Inter-Mennonite Cooperation The 1983 triennial sessions conducted together with the Mennonite Church General Assembly gave us new vision and impetus to think inter-Mennonite. The General Boards of the two conferences met last November for some joint sessions. Ontario Mennonites decided that in 1988 a new Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada will replace four existing conferences—Inter-Mennonite Conference, Conference of United Mennonites (GC), Mennonite Conference of Ontario and Quebec and Western Ontario Mennonite Conference. Similar preliminary discussions took place in Illinois and in the region served by Western District, South Central and Rocky Mountain Mennonite conferences of the Mennonite Church.

General Conference appointed three persons to participate on the Theological Education Committee of the Mennonite Church. Summer work camps became inter-Mennonite in 1986. Ways of sharing staff and working more closely together also received attention.

The joint General Conference/Mennonite Church human sexuality committee produced a study document which was used in many congregations, though not all. A portion of that committee continues to work in preparing for the presentation of its efforts to the triennial sessions.

The Mennonite and Der Bote Our time can be described as the "Information Age." With computers and word processors, it is possible to print out more information than we can possibly digest—on just about any subject.

Interdenominational or para-church groups prepare video and other glossy high-tech packages for Christian consumers. This approach has strong appeal also in GC churches. Our papers with their low budget productions have to depend on quality and reader loyalty to compete with the glamor. Our readership has held steady over the past 10 years. But, regrettably, we have not made great inroads to win new readers. The challenge will become greater in the years ahead.

The Mennonite, with a circulation of just under 14,000, commemorated a centennial of witness for Christ in the Oct. 22, 1985, issue. James Juhnke notes that *The Mennonite* has often worked hard to promote causes that were unpopular to its readers. But these causes were motivated by deep spiritual commitments to follow the total Word of God. Juhnke suggests that "no cause was closer to the heart of *The Mennonite* than missions" (p. 504). At the same time, it has often led in speaking for change, sustaining community and fostering dialogue over issues in tension within our conference.

Der Bote, published in German 48 times a year, has a circulation of under 6,600 in Europe, South America, Mexico, but mostly in Canada. Most of the content comes to the editor unsolicited from the readers.

Larry Meredith of Innovative Communications Corporation snaps pictures at Council of Commissions for the new General Conference slide set based on the theme of "no other foundation can anyone lay . . . than Christ Jesus."

Please pray that *The Mennonite* and *Der Bote* will continue to serve as the Holy Spirit leads.

Committee on the Ministry In 1955 at the Believer's Church Study Conference, R. L. Hartzler called for the General Conference to bring greater uniformity to our practices regarding ordination. Thirty-one years later the Committee on the Ministry is developing recommended procedures and guidelines for use throughout the General Conference.

Initial proposals call for a two-year "licensing" period accompanied by an internship/apprenticeship program with an experienced pastoral mentor and denominational orientation experiences. "Ordination" to ministry would be for those whose primary vocational commitment is to pastoral and special ministry positions such as missionaries and chaplains. The emphasis in ordination is that "the church ordains." This means that the local congregation initiates, the area conference examines and approves, and the General Conference confirms by issuing certificates and maintaining a registry of ordained persons.

Those who are called by the church to ministries which are limited by either time or place would be "commissioned" by the church, and might include lay ministry persons and short-term overseas workers.

These proposals will be further tested at an ordination consultation in November of this year.

John Esau works with conference ministers in the districts and provinces in helping congregations to find pastors and in looking after the needs of pastors from continuing education to support systems, including matters of salary.

U.S. Structures The Bethlehem '83 conference brought into existence a U.S. Assembly, a U.S. Council and a Commission on Home Ministries U.S. These have been functioning and in the next year or two need to be evaluated.

Miscellaneous Items As authorized by the 1983 triennial sessions, the conference is honoring the requests of four employees not to withhold income tax due to the U.S. Government. Thus far, Internal Revenue Service has not taken action against the conference.

During the past three years, two new significant positions were created when Carol Suter became development director. The other is the communications director position filled initially by Larry Cornies for a short time and with David Linscheid scheduled to take over July 1, 1986.

The total number of persons employed by the General Conference counting administrative and clerical, part-time and full-time, comes to 72 (this is a full-time equivalent of 55.5). This does not include North American workers, overseas missionaries or faculty and staff at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

General Conference began the triennium with 347 member congregations and a membership of 65,606. Congregations at Kempton, Pa.; Arena, N.D.; Birney, Mont.; Mankato, Minn.; and Duck Lake, Sask., closed because of inadequate members. Those at Sweet Home and Salem, Ore., withdrew their conference membership. Fourteen congregations have applied to join in 1986 and another six more have expressed interest. We should close the triennium with approximately 355 member congregations and a membership of around 65,600.

Many of us are confronted by difficult economic circumstances, especially farmers and those dependent on the farm economy. We feel pressures of all kinds from the permissive society in which we live. We cannot take for granted commitment to congregation or loyalty to conference. We cannot take for granted concepts of stewardship, peace, service or mission. In the face of these challenges, one detects a note of expectancy and assurance. We long for and expect renewal and revival. We feel confident that God through his spirit will continue to lead us as a people if we are faithful. *Vern Preheim, Bernie Wiebe and John Esau*

Division of Administration

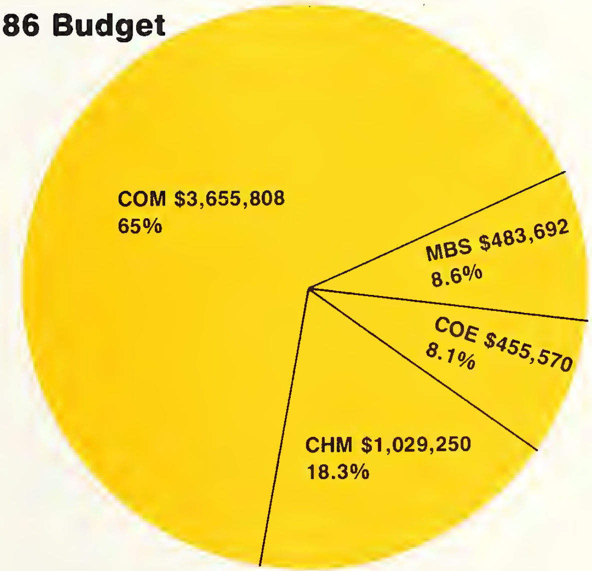
The Budget While the past triennium was a difficult one financially for the General Conference, it did end on a high note. In fiscal year 1985, the General Conference made budget for the first time since 1980.

The last year of the previous triennium, 1982, saw the General Conference reach only 92.7% of its budget of $5,064,530. As a result the General Board elected to retain the same budget for 1983. Receipts increased in 1983 to 96.1% of the budget. In 1984 an accounting change relating to handling trust fund income occurred which provided income from internal sources of approximately $135,000. The General Board expected a four percent increase in giving from congregations and individuals and passed a budget of $5,408,000. However a financial slump late in the year resulted in an actual decrease in congregational giving in 1984. Only 91.6% of budget was received. Again the General Board elected to not increase the budget, keeping it at $5,408,000 for the past fiscal year. The General Board also agreed to accelerate the use of Bequest Funds (see Trust Funds below) which would generate an additional 5-6% towards the budget. These extra funds aided by the generous giving related to the 125th anniversary celebration and a general upturn in congregational giving resulted in a total of 101.9% for 1985.

Thus, during the triennium, income budgets related to congregational and individual giving increased 4.0%. Actual congregational and individual giving increased approximately 6.7%. The inflation rate slowed dramatically this triennium compared to last, but the inflation increase of 11.8% as measured by the U.S. Consumer Price Index exceeded the increase in giving by about 5 percent.

For the triennium as a whole disbursements for expenses exceeded budget income received by $80,000. On a percentage basis 100.6% of receipts were spent. This amount almost exactly offsets the slight increase in receipts over disbursements in the 1980-1982 triennium.

1986 Budget



A disturbing trend from the point of view of conference finances as a whole was the increasing gap during the triennium in the percentages of budget received by the Commission on Home Ministries and the Commission on Education on the one hand and the Commission on Overseas Mission and the Mennonite Biblical Seminary on the other.

	Percent of budget received 1983	1984	1985
Commission on Education	93.4	85.7	92.2
Commission on Home Ministries	93.5	85.7	92.2
Commission on Overseas Mission	96.5	94.0	106.1
Mennonite Biblical Seminary	101.2	91.5	100.9

In view of this and in keeping with the philosophy that all parts of the conference program are necessary to the health of the whole, the Division of Administration and General Board brought a recommendation to the representatives at the 1986 Council of Commissions to change the method of allocating undesignated contributions (see box below). This action should result in all areas of conference work receiving the same percentage of budget at year end. This action, in and of itself, will not change the current ratios of program budgets to the whole General Conference budget (see pie graph below). Changes in the relative sizes of program budgets may occur once each triennium by action of the General Board subsequent to the triennial conference.

The only personnel change for the Division of Administration during the triennium were the additions of Carol J. Suter as Development Director on September 1, 1984, along with Eileen Kehler on a part-time clerical basis. Carol's office is in Bluffton, Ohio.

Carol's mandate by the General Board is to help long-range planning and coordinate study on a development plan for the General Conference. During the spring of 1985 Carol along with Vern Preheim, conference general secretary, conducted a series of 41 congregational cluster meetings throughout the U.S. and Canada called Dialogue '85. District and provincial conference leadership were also greatly involved in the cluster meetings. Carol prepared a report on what she had heard—thoughts and concerns regarding the spiritual climate within our churches as well as financial matters. She devoted many hours to exploring with staff and conference leadership the feasibility of U.S. districts and the conferences in Canada cooperating with the General Conference in a special fund campaign in 1987. Delegates at the Saskatoon sessions will decide whether or not to proceed with a fund campaign.

Trust Funds Trust funds are a separate accounting entity under the Division of Administration. Major funds making up the trust funds are the permanent endowment fund, gift annuity fund, emergency reserve trust fund and bequest fund.

The permanent endowment fund contains monies invested and income used according to the expressed wishes of the donor. The corpus of the fund remains intact. The total amount in the permanent endowment funds is $170,653.

The gift annuity fund is the balance of monies donated to the General Conference Mennonite Church on an annuity basis. Semiannual annuity payments are made to individuals at a rate based on their life expectancy. For example a person 65 years old would earn 7.3%; a person 75 would earn 8.5%; and a person 85 would earn 11.4%. At the individual's death, the original amount donated is distributed to General Conference programs according to the wishes of the annuitant as stipulated in the gift annuity agreement.

The total amount in the gift annuity fund on Jan. 31, 1986, is $525,496. Gift annuities provide an excellent vehicle for a person to make a contribution and at the same time receive periodic income for the remainder of his or her life. Income to the annuitants is partially tax exempt. Land and other appreciated property, as well as cash, can be used to purchase an annuity.

The emergency reserve fund provides a cushion against an emergency such as the need to evacuate missionaries or an economic crisis that would greatly reduce current contributions. The current level of funds is $421,216.

The bequest fund receives money from wills and estates of $10,000 or more. Over a ten year period, the monies are distributed to the program commission or seminary which has been designated by the donor. This procedure evens out the flow of funds to commissions from these large gifts, thereby aiding the budgeting process. The bequest fund dropped slightly during the triennium from $1,261,646 to $1,122,878. This drop was due primarily to the action by the Division of Administration authorizing a double distribution of bequest fund monies during the past fiscal year. In 1983, $300,795 was distributed to the commissions and seminary from bequest funds; in 1984, $312,547; and in 1985, $613,409.

Church Extension Services, Inc. CES is a separately incorporated subsidiary of General Conference which borrows money from individuals and churches and, in turn, lends that money to churches to finance capital projects.

At the end of the triennium 75% of the 40 loans are to North American churches while 25% are to churches in Asia and Latin America in conjunction with the work of the Commission on Overseas Mission. Currently four loans are made to churches in Canada in cooperation with the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

The past triennium saw the greatest growth in CES activity in its 25+ year history. The amount of money loaned to CES by churches and individuals has increased from $715,000 to $1,363,000, a 90% increase. These new funds have enabled CES to keep up with the demand for loans from new churches that have begun as a result of the church planting efforts by the Commission on Home Ministries and district conferences. Money is loaned to CES at 6 percent interest for one-year certificates and 7 percent interest for three-year certificates. Loans can then be made to churches at the rate of 8 percent.

Loans made during the past triennium increased our loan receivable balance from $670,000 to $1,246,000. Twenty-three congregations received loans (1983, 7; 1984, 8; 1985, 8), totaling $1,089,955.

There are currently three loans totalling $265,000 which have been approved by the Board of Directors of CES but for which loan monies have not yet been disbursed.

The request by churches for loan funds continues strong. CES offers a unique opportunity to gain a return on your investment and build up the church at the same time. *Ted W. Stuckey*

Pensions The General Conference Mennonite Church has two pension plans for its church workers. Canadian workers are enrolled in the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's plan with Excelsior Life Insurance Company. U.S. workers are enrolled in the General Conference pension plan underwritten by Presbyterian Ministers' Fund (PMF).

Participation by ministers is voluntary with enrollment occurring by mutual agreement between the minister and the local congregation. Currently only 42 percent of the eligible ministers are enrolled in the U.S. plan with PMF. Some U.S. ministers participate in other retirement plans, while others are relying entirely on Social Security. PMF is paying 11.25% interest on all funds on deposit in 1986.

Since participation in the pension plan is not mandatory, the ultimate responsibility for a minister's retirement must be assumed by the minister and his or her church. The Division of Administration strongly recommends that each church make the minister's pension allowance a priority budget item and recommends that annually an amount equal to 10 percent of salary be invested in the pastor's pension plan.

The Division of Administration is also concerned with the retirement needs of past church workers. We provide supplemental retirement fund benefits to missionaries who served under the conference boards prior to the time when adequate pension provisions were made. During 1986 approximately $66,000 will be required to supplement the Social Security and pension benefits which retired missionaries receive. Projections indicate that the need for these supplemental funds will peak in approximately 1989 at slightly over $85,000 per year. Some funds, however, will be required for at least the next 20 years.

Another related concern is the retirement needs of pastors who have served in our conference but who presently have insufficient retirement income. Currently approximately $20,250 per year is disbursed from the pastors' aid fund to retired ministers and/or their spouses. However, the fund is limited to those pastors who were at least age 55 before Jan. 1, 1979. *Duane R. Earley*

Stewardship Seeking God's will is our agenda. As we become serious about seeking God's will we must have a relationship with the King before we can pray "Thy Kingdom Come." We respond to God by being faithful stewards and planners. Our assignment is that of being managers for God. Our duty is also to the household of faith, carrying out our master's directive because we follow the New Testament concept of heirs and joint heirs. Our mutual responsibility is to build up the body of Christ.

It is my privilege to act on this by being with many committed Christians who come to seminars provided by the Stewardship Office. In these seminars we begin with a slide set that creates an awareness of stewardship management. This is followed by the biblical base for stewardship; we look at Old and New Testament stewards. After looking at new ways to define stewardship, we see the church as a resource rather than a "user" system. Having thus learned, we find it is natural to want to give. The church then works at an ongoing stewardship program or "next steps." Eighteen such seminars have been done in churches in the U.S. and Canada during the past year.

Donors have been visited who have given money and property in the form of cash, land, gift annuities. Donors have also included the General Conference in their wills.

On the 125th anniversary of the General Conference I personally spoke by phone to 209 pastors. These contacts combined with the people who prayed helped result in an offering of $179,162.12.

My work has also included working with the youth from Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., on a pilot stewardship program which will be unveiled at Saskatoon '86. When this program is completed the General Conference will have available a stewardship program for kindergarten through grade six, a program for youth and one geared to adults of any age.

These are exciting days. The Holy Spirit is at work. We appear to be listening. We are grateful to God. *Raymond Frey*

Change In Financial Treatment of Undesignated Contributions

At the Council of Commissions held Feb. 28 to Mar. 4, 1986, the council representatives approved a change in the bylaws of the General Conference regarding the method of distributing undesignated contributions. This action will distribute all undesignated funds as "where most needed" rather than "prorated" as is the current policy. The anticipated effect of such a change, based upon current and anticipated giving patterns in our constituency, is that each of the four program entities, the Commission on Education, Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Biblical Seminary will end the fiscal year with the same percentage of budget receipts.

The major reason for such a change is that inadequate amounts of "where most needed" contributions have been received in recent years leading to sizable differences between commissions in the final budget receipt percentages.

Contribution forms will have two categories—undesignated and designated. Contributions will be divided according to the traditional "prorated" basis only when specifically designated as "prorated."

The effective date of this change is Sept. 1, 1986. This will allow communication of the proposed change at Saskatoon '86 as well as other communication between March and July. With this beginning date sufficient undesignated contributions should be received so that by Jan. 31, 1987, all program boards should end up with the same budget percentage.

Commission on Education

The Commission on Education has had four goals during this past triennium. These are some ways in which COE has worked at meeting those goals.

I. Increase Biblical Understanding In 1984 we published *Discovery Bible Survey Course* by Maynard Shelly. This four-volume set is an intense study of the background of both Old and New Testaments as well as the Apocrypha and major themes of Scripture.

In 1985 the commission published four volumes in the Faith and Life Bible Studies—1 Peter, 1 Corinthians 1—7, Micah and Revelation. Faith and Life Bible Studies provides a verse by verse study of the various books of the Bible based on the New International Version. Future volumes to be released in 1986 are Colossians and Genesis 12—25. A planning and writing event to produce additional volumes in this series is planned for 1986. Authors thus far are David Schroeder, Gerald Gerbrandt, Marilyn Peters Kliewer, Helmut Harder, Waldemar Janzen and Philip Bender.

Young adult conferences, particularly Perspective '84 and Break '85, fostered personal commitment and growth in Christian faith and kingdom values.

During the triennium, James L. Dunn, past secretary for young adult and church school education, encouraged students to enroll in Bible classes at our General Conference schools and promoted church school consideration of a minimum core of Bible courses. COE recommended Bluffton College's implementation of the church work certificate.

II. Strengthen Families Mennonite Marriage Encounter continues to expand participation and is up 30% from 1983. The number of weekends per year has stabilized to around twelve. New leadership is being trained. Though the financial contributions of the Mennonite Church have diminished significantly, participation and leadership have constantly maintained the inter-Mennonite nature of MME at approximately the ratio of MC/GC populations.

We encouraged effective communication links between scattered students and young adults and their families and congregations through the administration of the annual student and young adult census, by maintaining and expanding the contact person network, and by providing an effective periodical communication link called *in search*. COE also produced the elective course *Teens and Sexuality* (by Hilda Enns, Sue Goerzen and Lois Paff Bergen) as well as a pre-marriage manual called *Preparation for Marriage* (compiled by Sue Goerzen, Lois Paff Bergen and Fred Unruh).

Celebrating Differences, edited by Aldred Neufeldt, is a special unit in the Foundation Series that will put any congregation in touch with disabled persons in their community who have much to offer everyone. An example is *Bethy and the Mouse: God's Gifts in Special Packages* by Don Bakely, which offers a glimpse into the learning and joy found in a family with disabled children.

Myrna and Randy Krehbiel, secretaries for family life education, prepared an annotated bibliography that will help people looking for resources about marriage enrichment experiences. We also met this objective by researching and writing family life articles and providing workshops that resource people in the area of marriage enrichment.

III. Strengthen Church Community Foundation Series curriculum is provided for children, youth and adults. The children's curriculum was revised during the last triennium resulting in increased use. A handbook of information based on the revised Foundation Series will be available spring 1987 for general information and teacher-training events.

We provide the Uniform Series lessons with the *Adult Bible Study Guide, Bibel Studien fuer Erwachsene*, and *Builder* magazine. We provide resource materials such as *On the Line* and *With* magazine. A staff of ten per-

Lucy Gerber, left, explains her art work to Rosella Wiens Regier as they chart the new mission education material.

I want to share my positive comments after completing the second quarter of the preschool Foundation Series "Jesus Is Born." I found the material easy to adapt to any class size with a variety of learning activities to choose from to accommodate short attention spans. Most of all I appreciated the informative facts relating to the growth and developmental stages of the preschooler, "Teaching Tips," that greatly assisted this 40-year-old teacher!—Pat Steiner, Hamilton, Ohio

sons scattered in the five provincial and five district conferences continues to introduce, service, and interpret the Foundation Series in their given areas. A new quarterly piece, *Faith and Life News*, keeps church leaders abreast of publications and happenings at Faith and Life Press. Dick Rempel estimates that more than 2,808,000 items are now "out there" in the constituency and in the broader market.

During this triennium Faith and Life press books were carried to bookstores across the United States by publisher's representatives. Faith and Life Press now has an order and shipping point in Canada: Faith and Life Press Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Man. R3P 0M4. We also operate two Faith and Life bookstores.

Paula Diller Lehman, secretary for youth education, worked at youth issues while teaching a course in 1983 at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. She has promoted cluster meetings of youth sponsors through provincial and district youth workers on this issue.

The Commission on Education coordinated Consultation '84 with over 50 people in attendance. The result of this was increased interaction with provincial and district leaders which filtered down to local church ownership and involvement in Christian education. We are planning for another such event in 1987.

During the triennium, J. W. Sprunger visited the congregations in the Northern District and Eastern District.

Chris Koop and Paula Diller Lehman (foreground) help keep the parachute up at last January's Faith Family Festival in Henderson, Neb.

COE promoted and encouraged the use of intergenerational education materials. We developed the resource *Young or Old or In Between* by Bertha Harder (an intergenerational study kit on aging) and we hosted the Faith Family Festival in Henderson, Neb., last January.

To help interpret our uniqueness in being a people of God, we have published the *Anabaptist Mennonite Time Line*, edited by Robert Kreider. We helped fund the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*. We produced the Heritage slide sets and a volume entitled *Encircled: Stories about Mennonite Women* by Ruth Unrau.

An inter-commission project to publish mission education curriculum materials for congregations is well on its way. This course has been named *Neighbors Near and Far* and will focus, in 1986, on Hispanic North America and Latin America. The packet will include curriculum resources, fact sheets, offering projects, posters, and maps. A kit of authentic objects and information is available also, for a small rental fee. The course will incorporate stories from *I Heard Good News Today* by Cornelia Lehn as well as other stories.

IV. Develop More Effective Disciples COE has conducted workshops in a variety of settings throughout the conference. These have centered on teacher training, the Anabaptist view of the child, creative teaching methods, story telling, relating to youth, self esteem, family, young adults, and adult ministry on a variety of topics and subjects.

Project Teach was held in 1984 at Camp Ambassador, Owens Sound, Ontario and in 1985 at Swift Current, Saskatchewan. We had excellent participation at these past two Project Teach weeks.

Another area of leadership development is the ACT (Aid to Christian Teaching) weekend. This is an inter-Mennonite project designed to be a hands-on experience for church school teachers nursery to adult, superintendents, pastors, Christian education committee members. This extended weekend will be held September 1986.

We helped sponsor and fund Mennonite writers conferences each year. One is planned for the summer of 1986. We look for at least one manuscript per year which is worthy of developing into a feature book.

We established a working relationship with district and provincial youth workers. We are working with them to aid in the planning of the annual youth council and to clarify roles and responsibilities of youth council participants.

We provided opportunities of service where youth can experience discipleship issues. We increased our work camp locations and are working at increasing our youth participation in the work camp program called Mennonite Service Venture. We are working with the Mennonite Central Committee on a service audiovisual. We provided scholarships for students to attend Urbana conferences.

With magazine, edited by Susan Janzen, has as its main reason for being "helping the church disciple young people in the Christian life." Articles on Bible themes, Anabaptist distinctives, social problems, issues unique to the teenage development stages, and numerous other topics appear in the magazine.

Looking ahead Our vision for the future is to increase biblical understanding, to strengthen the family, to strengthen the church community, and to develop more effective disciples. Our goals will help build the goals of the General Conference to evangelize, to teach biblical principles, to develop leadership training and to promote Christian unity. We are excited that we can be a part of the General Conference vision for the future. There is hope for our hope is in the Lord, because we believe, with the Apostle Paul, that God is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, according to God's power that is at work within us. And therefore the glory belongs to the church and to Jesus Christ, to every generation forever and ever. Amen. (Paraphrased from Ephesians 3:20-21). *J. W. Sprunger*

Commission on Home Ministries

A proposal that couldn't be funded; priorities clarified At Bethlehem '83 the Commission on Home Ministries presented a proposal to move off a plateau in home missions work and venture a needed expansion of church planting and language mission work in North America. It would have meant adding $200,000 to a budget of about $950,000. That budget supported media ministries, peace and justice education and witness, evangelism and church planting efforts, Indian ministries—including the Hopi Mission School, Hispanic ministries, Chinese language church planting, Mennonite Voluntary Service, and some resources for congregational life.

After testing these plans at Bethlehem '83, we presented to General Board the reasons why our conference should shift priorities to meet language mission needs and opportunities caused by the new immigration wave of the '70s and the continuing shift of our population to urban areas. People from some countries that were closing their doors to missionaries were finding their way to North America where they are far easier to reach than they were in their traditional cultures. That proposal spelled out how an additional $200,000 would be used and why it was urgent.

The "no" to our proposal came because conference priorities could not be shifted to expand home mission work in North America without withdrawing from commitments to overseas needs and North American Christian education programs—unless contributions greatly increased. Instead, financial support leveled off in 1983 and in early 1984 CHM realized it could not afford the proposed expansion of home mission.

In 1984 our commission received 85 percent of its budget, dropped the Media Ministries position, and looked to the Mennonite Church and interdenominational workshops for help with media resources. We also did not refill a part-time position in congregational life resources.

We set about to rework the dream of a new thrust to the over 100 million unchurched people in North America. Instead of expansion we gave a sharpened focus to home ministries and named a priority for the '83-'86 triennium: "church planting with a peace witness."

The 1983 proposal-making was not in vain. We were able to carry out some of the less costly of the five proposals listed in the Bethlehem '83 report. We participated in Alive '85, a gathering of Anabaptists to examine our evangelism and its link to peacemaking. The Tenth Man

Commission on Home Ministries
church planting-evangelism
congregational life
ic ministries
ers council

Mennonite Indian Leaders Council celebrates Esther L. Rinner's 15½ years with CHM. Left to right are Ivorie Lowe, Elmer Myron, Esther Rinner, Emma Hart, Willis Busenitz, Betty Hart, Marian Franz, Malcolm Wenger.

Henry A. Fast, standing, addresses the 200 or so commission members and staff who gathered last March. Fast sits on the Commission on Home Ministries.

program was carried out with the help of General Conference Mennonite Men. The other three (language mission work with new immigrants, recruiting and equipping self-supporting church planters, and developing new resources for peace church evangelism) had to be held at the same level as before, even though the need increased. One of the exciting developments is that by 1986 11 Hispanic, 11 Chinese-language Mennonite churches, and some Laotian and Vietnamese fellowships have come out of the new immigration wave. The new Friendship Evangelism seminars have been eagerly attended wherever they have been conducted during the triennium.

The needs of 1986-1989; priorities renewed In the 1950s, most denominations were lulled into thinking that evangelism was taking care of itself. Families were larger and the peace and justice issues of the '60s and '70s had not made churches the arena of conflict that they became later. Membership was increasing and the climate was especially favorable to church growth. A primary concern was how to do a good job of Christian education with the large number coming into the churches. Many congregations built Christian education additions.

By the late '60s and '70s, many membership graphs were on the way down in a way that seemed unstoppable. Each year brought more membership shrinkage. In 1957, 81 percent of the U.S. population responded "yes" to the question, "Do you believe religion can answer all or most of today's problems?" By 1973, only 62 percent answered "yes" and at present it is still at that level (61 percent). The mainline denominations felt the change first with large losses, but finally in 1983 and 1984 our General Conference showed slight losses. Most of the U.S. districts and two of the Canadian provinces had losses in numerical strength. It seemed extremely difficult for us who had joined congregations when church life was "in" and central in the community to know how to evangelize when that climate changed. We were surprised at our resistance to doing evangelism differently from what we were used to when the climate was more favorable.

Fortunately, having our own seminary seemed to help many Mennonites know about the Anabaptist vision and what the Mennonite or Believers Church contribution is. Young people on the move frequently started Mennonite fellowships and congregations in many places without prompting from any mission committee. We owe much to those who communicated this understanding of the gospel and helped others catch the vision of a church of believers. This sense of having a unique mission likely helped save us from experiencing the large losses other denominations experienced.

Manuel Baez is in school at Goshen College preparing for a church planting assignment with and supported by CHM. In 1986 he produced a video presentation called "Let's Plant a Church."

Ernesto and Marina Pinto (supported by CHM and Women in Mission, respectively) are studying in Chicago and assisting in church planting.

However, our sense of walking another way than the society in which we live may have made evangelism more difficult for us. The '60s and '70s saw no real advances in our evangelism teachings or activities. We were dealing with issues that seemed more urgent. We didn't seem to give evangelism the priority it needed when the favorable climate of the '50s was gone. That has changed. Now congregations are looking for evangelism resources; we realize that we lack experience in sharing Jesus Christ with others.

Of course, the sharing of Christ has to be for deeper reasons than a declining membership graph. Membership records of the last two decades have exposed our needs. We are now being helped by: Alive '85, Friendship Evangelism seminars, resource materials to help us relate to inactive members, MVS units helping new congregations, and a variety of other study books, media tools and evangelism programs.

Taking evangelism more seriously has not been an easy change for us to make. Struggle is ahead of us. In our society, individual careers and fulfillment have a higher priority than the needs of the world. Individualism and hedonism show up in much Christian publishing that has tailored books to that market and found it profitable. The gospel gets marketed in appealing forms, encouraging us to think of ourselves as "consumers." A Christian entertainment industry has developed.

So the struggle is real for us to put God's mission first. The Commission on Home Ministries wants to be the kind of help so that no congregation is without its own evangelism plan.

The priority named by CHM after Bethlehem '83 sessions, "Church Planting with a Peace Witness," was renewed for the next triennium of 1986-89. We are committed to find all possible resources for congregations changing direction and taking more responsibility for evangelism.

Also, the need and opportunities brought out by the immigration influx described in our 1983 report is still there. We are recommending that the priority be expanded to particularly include language and ethnic minorities.

Equipped for partnership; priorities implemented The program CHM carries out is similar to team play. Sometimes congregations are in a position to make a goal and CHM tries to get the ball to the congregations for its outreach. Friendship evangelism seminars, youth counseling materials on peace issues, an MVS unit are examples.

Other times we are in a position to make a play and we ask for congregations to give us the ball for conference program. Examples are: Mobile Member report cards, prayer, financial support for Indian ministries, Mennonite Voluntary Service workers.

First, our commission gets the ball to the congregation. Home missions work calls for resources that congregations can use and CHM can provide. For example for peace and justice: Parenting for Peace and Justice, Peace and Justice newsletter (new in 1986), *God and Caesar* newsletter to help wrestle with tax questions in the U.S. and Canada, draft counseling (U.S.), Spanish translation of *The Way of Peace* (new), and video on the issues around aiding Central American refugees.

Examples of evangelism resources are: Friendship Evangelism seminars, Alive '85, study courses, mission education curriculum, evangelism programs and methods for congregations.

Examples of resources for church planting are: scholarship help for training events, guidelines and manuals (new), suggesting of films and other materials.

Mennonite Voluntary Service's 30 units help congregations do outreach by providing day care for children, tutoring or alternative education, housing rehabilitation, programs for the elderly, staff for community peace centers, and a variety of other ministries.

We provide congregational life resources in the form of: mission education tools such as project lists and "adopt-a-worker" programs, the Parish Paper on congregational life, the *ACTS Paper* which shares what other congregations have found helpful, a Spanish-language video (in process), deaf ministries (future plan), resources for understanding and reaching inactive members, the *Goals Discovery Plan*, and in planning retreats.

Examples of media tools are: media training scholarships, a variety of print and electronic media tools for local church outreach.

Our commission also asks for the ball from the congregations. In our team work to carry out our mission in North America, the Commission on Home Ministries is often in a position to make a goal and ask for assistance from the congregations. Congregations can help us: pray, visit workers or locations where home ministry work is going on, adopt specific projects or workers, appoint persons to be part of the Parenting for Peace and Justice network who will lead local workshops, contribute financial support for language missions, report to us when their members move (Mobile Member report cards), participate in the Tenth Man program, send us MVS workers of all ages, and help Hispanic students financially to get pastoral training. *E. Stanley Bohn*

Commission on Overseas Mission

Vital and Valid What has happened to the global vision for missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church since 1983? Is that global vision for missions still vital in the General Conference Mennonite Church as we approach the year 2000?

Signs indicate a dimming of the missionary vision, especially among those 50 years of age and younger. Perhaps we are losing a biblical perspective for the world and God's vision for its salvation. Perhaps in our desire to be respectful in an age of growing religious pluralism we have lost our conviction that eternal salvation is found only in Jesus Christ. Perhaps we have mirrored North America's isolationism and protectionism of the 1980s.

A global mission vision is *valid* as we approach the year 2000. The biblical mandate has not changed: God desires that all experience the wholeness of salvation now and for eternity. Statistics reveal a majority of the global population is estranged from Jesus Christ and outside of the body of Christ—well over three billion persons. Opportunities for missions are numerous, limited less by "closing doors" and more by rebellion against the Holy Spirit. Overseas churches are consistently asking the Commission on Overseas Mission for more personnel than it is able to recruit and prepare. The vision is valid.

Signs of mission vitality among our people include: During this past triennium we sent 71 new missionaries overseas. Our people contributed 10.2 million dollars for overseas missions. Prayer partners remembered our overseas churches and missionaries.

How can the General Conference strengthen this global vision in the full vitality that God intends? In September 1985 commission members, missionaries, staff and resource persons forged a new statement of overseas mission priorities for the next decade, 1985-1995. The following came out on top.

Priority 1: Evangelism and Church Planting The conversion of Cheba Traore in Burkina Faso was a tremendous encouragement. Our missionaries expected to spend years in sensitive ministries relating to people and working at linguistics so that some day there might be a Mennonite church. Everyone was surprised when first one and eventually over a hundred persons came to faith in Christ.

Chaplains in Taiwan report that well over one hundred persons each year make commitments to Jesus Christ. Itinerant ministries in Zaire have resulted in many persons becoming part of the body of Christ.

One goal of evangelism is to plant churches. One church planting ministry in Taguatinga, Brazil, now has its own ordained pastor who only four years ago was newly converted to Christ.

Not all evangelism and church planting is done by our missionaries. We cooperate with overseas churches. Subsidies are provided to the church in India for evangelism in remote areas.

Looking to the future, our commission intends to respond to the opportunities for evangelism and church planting in new areas—urban settings and unreached peoples. Latin America was singled out as a continent where COM should take special initiative.

About 12% of our missionary team now has evangelism and church planting as a *primary* assignment. The commission made a firm commitment to increase the percentage to 30% as a minimum. All missionaries, however, are to some degree involved in evangelism ministries and are provided training in evangelism.

The ministries of evangelism and church planting through missionaries and the churches overseas have resulted in more than 50,000 Mennonite Christians in the countries where we serve.

Priority 2: A New Vision for Missions Our churches in North America need continual energizing toward a new vision for missions. This is also true of overseas churches, which have been slow to capture such a global vision. There are, however, some notable exceptions. Mennonite churches in Colombia are contributing 10% of their national church giving to our commission, thus participating in the mission of our conference.

That the earth may be filled with
the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

Robert L. Ramseyer (at podium) instructs a class at the Overseas Mission Training Center, Elkhart, Ind.

The biblical mission imperative needs renewed emphasis in our North American churches. Uncertainty about beliefs results in less interest in making these beliefs known, and consequently less readiness to consider missions. On the other hand, a solid biblical understanding of the missionary nature of the church produces a sense of urgency to share the good news of Jesus Christ and a readiness to consider missions.

Missions, however, must be communicated in the context of today's world. Missions today are often in partnership with overseas churches; missionaries serve *under* these emerging churches, sometimes in volatile political, social, and economic situations.

Our congregations are encouraged to adopt a missionary or missionary family. "Adoption" means specifically praying for and contributing toward the financial support of the missionary. An increasing number of churches are thus personalizing their support of overseas missions.

The widely-used *Overseas Prayer Directory* is published every two years. Families and individuals use it during their daily devotional times. Some churches use the directory by placing copies in the hymn book racks and referring to them each Sunday.

Overseas mission tours are being planned. These give members of our churches an on-site experience of the realities of the overseas churches.

Priority 3: A Ministry of Wholeness The good news of reconciliation in Jesus Christ relates to the needs of humankind. The human condition includes poverty, disease, hunger, injustice and war. We are committed to a ministry of wholeness in the midst of a world desperately needing a demonstration of the wholeness of salvation which only Jesus Christ offers.

Evangelism, church planting and leadership training are complemented by caring ministries: medical, educational, developmental, peace and justice. In some overseas contexts one or more of these ministries is already cared for by other agencies—governmental or church. In each situation, however, we will attempt to minister appropriately.

Our commission has medical ministries in Zaire, Burkina Faso, Taiwan, India and Mexico. Agricultural development is currently focused in Zaire. Educational involvements include India, Zaire, Colombia, Botswana and Brazil.

Priority 4: Leadership Training Church leaders need training at various levels. Lay leadership training occurs in local churches. Theological Education by Extension has been effective in training local lay and pastoral leadership. Our missionaries are heavily involved in TEE in Brazil, Uruguay and Zaire.

On the formal level of Bible institutes and seminaries, we work in Zaire, Colombia, Paraguay, Bolivia, Taiwan and India. As much as possible leadership training should occur either in the country or the continent where the church is located. However, necessary specialized training at the postgraduate level can be provided in another country. Where specialized Anabaptist/Mennonite training is necessary, COM assists leaders in spending a year at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind.

A baptism service of the Guanabara and Itatiaia churches of Goiania, Brazil.

Among new religious movements, the African Independent Churches of southern Africa represent a unique opportunity to respond to requests for Bible teaching. Several of our missionaries (serving under the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission) are involved in Bible teaching ministries among AIC in Botswana, Lesotho and the Transkei.

Although the focus of leadership has traditionally been on pastors, a new level of leadership is needed: professors and theologians for the Bible institutes and seminaries overseas.

Priority 5: Recruitment and Preparation of Missionaries Responding to the 1980 vision for increasing the missionary team, from the low of 132 the General Conference rallied in sending an additional 25 missionaries. In December 1984 we had a total of 158 missionaries serving. Most of this increase was due to a new "Overseas Mission Volunteer" short-term program with a self-imposed maximum of not more than twenty out of our total missionary team.

After several years, however, of not meeting our income budgets the message signaled to our churches has impacted the availability of missionary candidates. Current budgets are unable to sustain the 1984 level. Projections for 1986 allow for 140 missionaries.

Each year we send between 20 and 30 new missionaries overseas. This reflects no increase in missionary numbers but rather the retirement of some missionaries and the termination of others. Thus, it is important to sustain a significant recruitment of new missionary candidates from our churches.

The invitations which are highest in demand from overseas churches involve the most difficult assignments: evangelism and church planting. Such assignments demand academic and theological training, church experience in North America, a tolerance for ambiguity and a readiness to serve multiple terms. During the next triennium COM will need to place a high priority on the recruitment of this kind of people.

Training for overseas mission occurs at various levels. A basic seminary training is foundational to more specific mission courses. The Mission Training Center at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries meets a strategic need in preparing missionaries. Candidates also need practical experience. For example, when missionaries are placed in cross-cultural urban centers overseas it is important for them to have had experience in urban ministries in North America. Overseas missionaries for assignments in our modern world of political and economic turmoil must also have training in stress management.

Karen Intagliata (right) studies the Bible with her neighbor in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

Priority 6: Inter-Agency Cooperation The Mennonite congregation in Oita, Japan, sends a contribution through COM for support of a missionary family in Zaire. The Mennonite Church of Mexico is sending regular support through COM for a missionary serving in Uruguay. The Colombia Mennonite Church has been mentioned under Priority 2. These illustrate a growing international cooperation in mission.

The search is on for new models of international cooperation in mission. We are a global community of churches with a global ministry. We are ready to cooperate with churches overseas in new cooperative ministries. Our commission must not become a multi-national mission corporation with a concentration of power in North America.

COM cooperates with other North American Mennonite mission agencies in mission programs overseas: Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (five-denominational partnership); China Educational Exchange (six mission agencies); with Mennonite Board of Missions in Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay and Japan; and with Eastern Mennonite Board in Hong Kong.

Priority 7: Urban Ministry By 2000 at least 3.2 billion persons will be living in urban centers (equal to the entire world population in 1965). Our commission already ministers in Tokyo, Kinshasa, Kananga, Recife, Bogota. Missionaries who have grown up in rural or suburban settings are challenged by the shift. COM is committed to help in the training of missionaries who can effectively evangelize and plant churches in urban centers.

Priority 8: Theological Reflection In the course of missionary activity, questions emerge which have no ready-made answers. Culture and Scripture interacting with daily living forge new answers. We are committed to listen to the questions and reflect on the struggles coming out of the missionary experience. Missionaries, staff and commission members need to reflect theologically and missiologically.

Roelf Kuitse visited missionaries in Africa this spring. He has been able to interact with missionaries in their attempts to faithfully serve and minister cross-culturally.

These are the eight priorities of the Commission on Overseas Mission and ways that they are being addressed. *Erwin Rempel*

Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Introduction When the conference sessions convened in Bethlehem, Pa., in 1983, the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries had the privilege of reporting to the joint (GC/MC) sessions. For the many facets of our church programs which we can do together we praise God.

The past three years have been good ones. The year of highest enrollment in the seminaries' history was 1983-84: 244 students came from across our continent and some from around the world. Each year since, however, has seen a small drop in enrollment. Nonetheless, as our admissions counselor, James Metzler, travels through our churches, he reports that interest for seminary training is high. What is needed is for congregations to encourage and challenge individual people to make plans to prepare for church service. Together we work at this common task.

Faculty Over the last three-year period our faculty has changed. J. C. Wenger and Paul M. Miller have moved to full retirement from teaching. Jake Enz, Millard Lind and Erland Waltner are semi-retired, and Paul Roten is moving into retirement. For the services of these faculty members we express deep appreciation. They continue to be present with us in the classroom, writings, recollections, and the new opportunities of retirement careers.

New appointments are: Erick Sawatzky, director of field education; Gary Martin, instructor in evangelism and church planting; Daniel Schipani, professor of Christian education; Marcus Smucker, assistant professor of pastoral theology; Perry Yoder, associate professor of Old Testament; June Alliman Yoder, instructor in communications and preaching. Further appointments will be made in Old Testament, New Testament and preaching.

The 1985 graduating class of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries: 53 people came from 13 U.S. states, five Canadian provinces, and six other countries. Of these graduates, 46 received the Master of Divinity degree, four in the peace studies program, and 3 completed a certificate in theology.

GRADUATES

	1984	1985	1986 (expected)
M.Div.	14	20	15
M.A. Peace Studies	1	3	2
Certificate in Theological Studies	1	1	4
M.A. Theological Studies	–	–	2
	16	24	23

Internships Every summer, up to a dozen students serve churches as summer assistants. Each year up to two dozen students move into churches as pastors or associate pastors. Of these a number have been women. Some couples have accepted assignments as pastoral teams.

Current plans are being pursued to place some students as interns or apprentices with regular pastors. In this way they have the opportunity to do their first year of pastoring under the supervision of an experienced minister. After a couple of years, this procedure will be evaluated and adapted accordingly.

M.A. in Theology We have been encouraged to see the continuing number of persons who enroll in the three-year Master of Divinity course. However, there have always been those who have asked for a two-year course focused more on theology. For the coming year such a two-year program will be introduced to constitute a second two-year program along with the master's degree in peace studies. Several of our current students will transfer into the theology program.

Campus This past summer two eight-apartment complexes were constructed at a cost of $535,000 to allow for more students to live on campus. Two further units of the same size are on the drawing board for the next years. In addition, we project an enlargement of our current library facilities in line with our master plan.

God continues to call workers into the various ministries of the church, and each year there are those who respond. We express to you, our churches, our thanks for joining us in this exciting training program. We covet your prayers for doing the task with renewed commitment and faithfulness. *Henry Poettcker*

For 1985-86 Women in Mission provided six scholarships to women for study at Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Front row: Cynthia Neufeld, Sue Ramseyer, Victoria Dyck; back row: Laura Loewen and Karen Martens Zimmerly. (Not pictured: Christine Juhke)

Women in Mission

Introduction Women in Mission is committed to the total mission of the church. Its logo (the cross, the world and the dove) represents its purpose—that of bringing hope, salvation, love, peace, justice and freedom to all.

WM is a network of women, organized for study and service. Its 10,000 women work as volunteers in churches and communities, interpret General Conference programs to the local church, raise money, lead Bible studies, relate to the hurting and lonely, are concerned about issues, are advocates for the poor, and serve in Mennonite Central Committee thrift shops. They support local, district and provincial projects such as colleges, camps, nursing homes, hospitals and voluntary service units. They meet yearly for retreats, conferences and leadership workshops.

Overseas mission is supported through prayer, finances, sewing material aid items, relating to missionary families, sponsoring mutual cross-cultural visits, providing scholarships to national women equipping them for ministry in medicine, pastoral work and teaching.

WM helps shape program and policy through representation on the commissions and boards of the conference. As an arm of the conference, WM cooperates with various inter-commission projects. Links occur in various ways, the most common being through financial assistance and through cooperation in program efforts.

Inter-Commission Work With CHM and COE, WM helped plan and sponsor a Parenting for Peace and Justice leadership training seminar for representatives from provinces and districts. This seminar was videotaped and made available to leaders for use in local PPJ workshops.

Another cooperative venture is that of mission education materials, a long-standing interest in WM. WM is working with the commissions in mission education curriculum for children in local churches. The first set in a series of three will cover a study on Latin America and North American Hispanic work.

WM's concern for the spiritual welfare of children in the church prompted salary support enabling COE to hire a conference children's worker (a commitment of $15,000 per year for three years).

Scholarships With the CHM Hispanic Ministries program, WM has spoken to the needs of Hispanic sisters through scholarship grants for leadership training for church-related ministries.

The Women's World Outreach fund has been tapped numerous times for overseas national women. During the past triennium, some 50 such women have benefited through this scholarship fund. In addition to this fund, over a third of the financial contributions for the Mennonite World Conference travel fund were provided by WM.

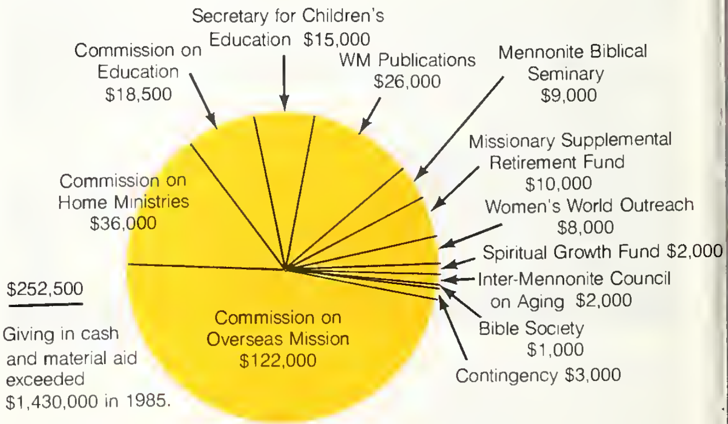
Through a planned visitation program these past three years, the WM executive and staff visited most districts and provinces to interpret the work of General Conference and Women in Mission.

The affirmation for leadership training of women for ministry roles within the conference is supported through efforts of providing scholarships for women at Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Eighteen such scholarships were given to women during this past triennium. Seminary education grants were also given to spouses of pastors for the January interterm at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

WM's interest in Television Awareness Training (TAT) resulted in financing and identifying persons who would take TAT training and conduct workshops. Fifteen persons in North America are now trained for this work.

Window to Mission, the WM magazine, serves as the communication link with the WM constituency. It appears in *The Mennonite* six times a year, highlighting the work of the commissions and seminary, sharing inspiration and creating awareness of issues.

Goals Women in Mission goals for the 1980s are: foster spiritual growth; strengthen relationships with North American minority women and women abroad; assist women in developing and sharing their gifts; relate to the hurting and lonely; strengthen family and marriage relationships; unite efforts to improve television; encourage more communication among WM groups and conferences; continue financial support of G.C.-related ministries. *Joan Wiebe*



Giving in cash and material aid exceeded $1,430,000 in 1985.

Credits Burton Buller, 7; Commission on Home Ministries, 10 (lower), 11; Commission on Overseas Mission, 13 (lower); Stephen Intagliata, 14; John Hiebert, 12; Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 13 (upper), 15, 16 (upper); Muriel T. Stackley, 1, 2, 6, 9, 10 (upper); Grant Unrau, 8. *Design and graphs* John Hiebert. Printed in U.S.A.

"We must pray to God so that the contras will not keep killing our children, our old people and our women," Rosa Nubia Gonzales, a Nicaraguan Christian told Mennonite Central Committee workers Jim and Ann Hershberger. Margaret and Terry Tremwel, MCC agriculturists in northern Nicaragua, write, "Funding the counterrevolutionary forces here in Nicaragua has its greatest and indeed only direct impact on peasant farmers and villagers. There is virtually no direct effect on population centers and absolutely no effect on the Sandinistas in positions of authority."

Bill Kay, a member of the Seattle Mennonite Church, and Steve Ratzlaff, the pastor of that congregation, have completed serving a three-day sentence in a federal halfway house for their part in a sit-in demonstration at the office of Congressman John Miller last June. The protest was part of a nationwide action by the Pledge of Resistance, a religiously based group working at peace and justice issues in Central America and aimed at stopping U.S. aid to the "contras" in Nicaragua.

The 28th annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale was held March 14-15 in Peoria. The auction featured 117 quilts, comforters and afghans, and many handcrafted items. A hand-carved sculpture by Loren Schlipf of El Paso, Ill., sold for $3,500. A sleigh sold for $5,000 and was donated to the Illinois Mennonite Museum. Twenty percent of the sale's income went to local relief efforts.

MMA holds first health ethics hearing

Newton, Kan. (MMA)—"I struggle with this every day," said a nursing home chaplain, referring to ethical dilemmas of whether or not to use "heroic" means of keeping patients alive.

Mennonite Mutual Aid convened its first in a series of hearings on such health-care issues at Faith Mennonite Church here on May 3. About 60 people attended the day-long event, which was moderated by Ronald J. Litwiller, vice president of Mutual Aid Services.

Litwiller called the meeting a hearing "because MMA wants to hear from people in congregations about these issues."

Three panelists gave presentations, then responded to questions or comments from the audience. Willard Krabill, a physician and MMA consultant from Goshen, Ind., talked about "New Ethical Dilemmas in Health Care." LaVerne E. Epp, a lawyer from Newton, spoke about "Decision Making: Living Wills." And Nick Rempel, pastor at Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church, talked about "Morality in Decision Making."

Krabill said that we're seeing a revolution in the health-care field. "With the rapid development of technology," he said, "the gap between possibility and practicality widens." The resources are scarce. While hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent keeping a person alive who will never regain consciousness, many children are malnourished. In today's context patients tend to be treated like machines, and doctors become technicians.

Epp reviewed the case of Karen Quinlan, the brain-damaged young woman whose parents had to go to court to get doctors to take her off a life-support system. He said that most states have natural death acts in some form. These recognize the legality of "living wills," written statements in which a person says that they do not want to be kept alive heroically.

Rempel called on the family and church to be more involved in moral decision making. He related several experiences in which he and others from his church have worked with a family in the church who was facing a decision about letting a loved one die.

Response from the audience, many of whom were health-care workers, was sympathetic. Marvin Ewert, administrator at Bethel Deaconess Hospital in Newton, asked about ambiguity versus absolutes: What is sanctity of life?

Krabill responded, "To what extent do we keep living corpses alive while children in the ghettos suffer without funds? Is it biological life or life in relationship that is sacred?"

What about money? someone asked. Should the family decide when others are paying for it? One nurse said that it's easier to decide for someone else, but when it's your own family member it's different. Another noted that the family will often keep a person alive because of their guilt.

Rempel said this is why it's so important for the congregation to be involved, to provide support.

Floyd Bartel, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Newton, said, "That's great, but I'm afraid it's the exception." He said that we have opted for individualism so much in our congregational life that people guard their private lives tenaciously.

Martha Graber of North Newton agreed. "Families don't come to the church for help."

In his opening talk Krabill made the point that "in the moral enterprise it is often the goal to ask the right questions," since answers are not readily at hand. Most of the discussion involved questions. Everyone realized that there are no easy answers.

Other questions arose. Do people have the right to let themselves die when they no longer want to live? Is it suicide for a person to withhold care from oneself in order for money that would have been spent to be spent elsewhere? What's the difference between a healthy longing for heaven, a death wish and suicide?

"We've talked about heroic efforts," said one nurse, "but even normal nursing care prolongs life." Another said, "Too many people die in hospitals. They shouldn't have to."

Three case studies were presented—people known to MMA who are currently alive. One was a 26-year-old man who was burned severely and wants to die. He's been in pain for nine months.

Litwiller mentioned a similar case in Texas in which a burn victim was not allowed to die and eventually "recovered" enough to function. He said, "Well, I'm alive, but don't do it to anyone else."

A second case was a 76-year-old man who wants to be taken off the respirator, but his wife and son won't agree to it.

The third was a 92-year-old woman who is incoherent now but who said six years ago that people should be allowed to die naturally.

Finally, sympathy was expressed for medical personnel. "Physicians are increasingly placed in conflict-of-interest situations," Krabill said. Martha Graber added, "Medical personnel often don't feel supported by our congregations."

People left with more but perhaps clearer questions, and emotionally drained but with a sense of having worked at tough issues together. It became clear that more work lies ahead, work that will need to be done together. *Gordon Houser*

A French language edition of Peter Falk's book *The Growth of the Church in Africa* has recently been published in Zaire with the title *La Croissance de l'Englise en Afrique*. The 500-page book is the first of its kind for French-speaking Africa. An Africa Inter-Mennonite missionary, Falk serves as director of a theological college serving evangelical churches in Zaire.

The 10th anniversary of the martyrdom of Father Joao Bosco Penido Burnier will be remembered in services throughout the United States on Sunday, Oct. 12. The Jesuit missionary died protesting the use of torture in Brazil. The commemoration is intended to call the church to join in the fight to end torture throughout the world. For information contact American Christians for the Abolition of Torture, 6117 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144, (215) 849-7450.

A Laotian ministries program in Ontario sponsored by the General Conference continued to thrive in 1985, with five congregations now worshiping in Ontario. Congregation locations include St. Catharines, Hamilton, Toronto, Newmarket and Leamington. The Laotian congregation project is financially supported jointly by the Conference of United Mennonite Churches of Ontario, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the local General Conference and Mennonite Brethren congregations.

Historian gives Martin Luther King challenge at AMBS

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—Solving world-size problems will be done by people like Martin Luther King Jr., who participate with God in the creation and re-creation of their own personhood. That was the perspective of Vincent Harding in the annual theological lectureship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries here April 24-25.

Harding, the world's leading black historian, sounded a note of hope for humanity in four addresses on "The Challenge of Martin Luther King Jr." A number of people referred to the series as revival sermons.

The legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. has a continuing impact on America and the world 18 years after his death, Harding said. The continuing challenge includes King's emphasis on the transformation of society through non-violence, his call to poor people across racial lines—as in the Vietnam War—to stop killing other poor people, and the search for the healing of all people in a broken and diseased society.

The lectures on the King challenge were "The Making of the Man," "Redeeming the Soul of America: The Movement and the Man," "Blessed Astronaut of the Human Adventure" and "When the Nation Is Ready: The Continuing Challenge."

The professor of Religion and Social Transformation at Iliff School of Theology, Denver, in the first lecture identified a dozen crucial choices in King's life, saying, "We participate in the creation of our own personhood largely by the choices we make."

King's choices within a "profoundly influencing family," included joining the church; attending Morehouse College in Atlanta, which opened him "to a great world"; training for Christian ministry at Crozer Seminary near Philadelphia, doctoral studies at Boston University, which "set him fully into the service of God through the service of God's needy world"; marriage in Boston to classmate Coretta Scott; their return to the south in 1954, and bypassing Atlanta to pastor in Montgomery, Ala.

When the people of Montgomery came to the door of the new, articulate, pastor with a Ph.D. to call him to leadership of what would become the civil rights movement, Martin King said no to a personal career to work on behalf of black people and all humankind, Harding said. He accepted the call to leadership knowing he was "opening himself to death."

Harding indicated a number of bad choices King made, yet he called the group to see "that not even our weaknesses are an excuse for not responding to the call of God." King, in spite of his bad choices and weaknesses "became and wanted to be such a powerful channel of God's grace. That was his concern for the world."

Harding's impromptu responses to questions at the end of each lecture revealed his own deep reflection and commitment to hope and encouragement to the church to create and re-create, despite failures, the spiritual and social responses to meet the whole needs of people in the frightening present.

Seminary professors C. J. Dyck (left) and Gayle Gerber Koontz with Vincent Harding

He encouraged the seminaries to renew action in the Elkhart community on racial-social justice. In his last lecture he said, "The God of the hard times people is always there. Our God is forever and will be our guide unto death."

Harding is currently on leave from Iliff as Lang Visiting Professor at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. He received his master's degree in journalism from Columbia University and a doctorate in history from the University of Chicago.

He was lay pastor of Woodlawn Mennonite Church in Chicago prior to serving in the Southern Freedom Movement 1961-65, followed by teaching at Spelman College, Atlanta. After King was assassinated in 1968, Harding became the first director of the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta. *John Bender*

Family life position

The General Conference Mennonite Church Commission on Education is accepting applications for a qualified person/couple to work in the areas of

- family life education
- Mennonite Marriage Encounter
- parenting concerns
- intergenerational education.

Available **Aug. 1**

For more information or to apply contact:
Executive Secretary
Commission on Education
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

Most aggression researchers think that the recent U.S. bombing attack on Libya was a serious mistake and that it will lead to an increase in violence in the Middle East, according to a recent poll. While stating that there is an urgent need for scientific studies on violence between nations, the researchers say that there are many parallels to the findings on aggression between individuals and in families. They point to the cycle of escalating anger and violence, both verbal and physical. The survey was conducted by Thomas Radecki, psychiatrist and research director of the National Coalition on Television Violence.

A documentary film about an American doctor in El Salvador won an Academy award March 24. *Witness to War: Dr. Charlie Clements*, produced by David Goodman of the American Friends Service Committee and directed by Deborah Shaffer, is based on the life of Clements, who was a distinguished U.S. Air Force pilot who flew cargo planes in Vietnam. He later left the air force and became a doctor who provided health care to the civilian population behind guerrilla-controlled lines in El Salvador from 1982-83.

Stewards in Mission seminars were held April 4-5 at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and April 14-15 at Pleasant Hill Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. Paul Dietterich, executive director of the Center for Parish Development in Chicago, led the Kansas seminar. Raymond Frey and Carol Suter, stewardship and development directors for the General Conference, respectively, led the seminar held in Saskatchewan.

Japan Mennonites say farewell to Vorans, welcome pastors

From left: Mayumi Miki, Otsuko, Aogu and Yoshihara Moekawa, Lois and Peter Voran, and Pastor Matoba

Hyuga, Japan—"Goodbye" and "Welcome." These sad and happy words were echoed March 24 when 10 pastors, their wives, two Bible school students, a lay leader and missionaries of the Japan Mennonite Christian Church Conference met for several hours of fellowship and sharing in the Hyuga Mennonite Church in Miyazaki Prefecture.

The mixed occasion was to bid farewell to Peter and Lois Voran, General Conference Mennonite missionaries, who are retiring in June after serving in Japan for 28 years, and to welcome a new pastor couple, Yoshihara and Atsuko Maekawa and their one-year-old son, Aogu, and the first Japanese Mennonite female pastor, Mayumi Miki, as they begin serving churches in the Kyushu area.

The Vorans came to Japan in 1951 and spent two years in language school in Kobe. It was during this time that the "Kobe Garage Group," a small group of new Christians, came to birth as missionaries in language school became involved in teaching English to young people.

Among these were Takashi Yamada and Hiroshi Yanada. During a short sharing time, Voran said, "I really wasn't interested in teaching English, but these young men came for English, and we couldn't speak anything else, so we became friends." The result? Both Yamada and Yanada accepted the Lord and today are pastors of Mennonite churches in Miyazaki Prefecture. Both were present at the farewell.

In his welcoming address, Moritoshi Nomura, lay leader and present chairman of JMCCC, shared some of his insights into Mennonite history. He went on to say, "You missionaries have four crosses to bear. First, you need courage and decision; second, you have to change country and culture; third, you need much patience; and fourth, you must persevere diligently."

After the devotional time, the women were excused while the men interviewed the new pastors. Men have conferences and seminars, but pastors' wives are usually left at home with family and other responsibilities.

The Hyuga Church, where the Vorans have been pastoring for the past seven years, called Maekawa to serve as pastor in April. The Maekawas come from the Oita Mennonite Church. Three years ago they went to seminary in Tokyo and graduated in March.

Mayumi Miki, a member of the Beppu Mennonite Church, also graduated from seminary in March. The Fukuoka Mennonite Church, which has been without a pastor since the Nomuras left to study in Elkhart, Ind., almost two years ago, asked Miki to serve them in April. *Mary Derksen*

Assistant pastor needed

First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a full-time assistant pastor, commencing Sept. 1. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry and assisting with pulpit duties. Ability to give leadership in church music would be an asset.

For information or application contact:
Archie Epp, congregational chairman
1513 Argyle Ave.
Saskatoon, SK S7H 2W3
(306) 374-1516.

Admissions counselor for Bluffton College. Duties include recruitment travel to high schools and college fairs, interviewing, correspondence and follow up with prospective students. B.A., preferably from liberal arts college, required; excellent communication, organizational and interpersonal skills; willingness to travel. Salary dependent on qualifications and experience.

Submit resumes **by June 16** to:
Fred Amstutz
Director of Admissions
Bluffton College
Box 638
Bluffton, OH 45817.

Mennonite Your Way Directory IV for the years 1984, '85 and '86 is still available. Copies are available for $7.50 each (Pennsylvania residents add 6 percent tax). Quantity prices are also available. Write Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538, (717) 653-9288.

Bibles do not need to be smuggled into China, according to the American Bible Society. ABS is undertaking its largest single project thus far, a Bible press costing over $6.5 million. The General Conference Mennonite Church, through its Commission on Overseas Mission, is contributing $1,000.

The sexual exploitation of children as young as 6 years old and the resulting arraignment of 10 suspects has raised the ire of Bruce Ritter, director of Covenant House, a Catholic crisis center for homeless youth. The focus of his indignation is Ed Koch, mayor of New York, and the current welfare hotel policy of his administration. Ritter, referring to the Times Square welfare hotels as "... broken-down, hellish flophouses...," has asked Koch to take action to protect the children who live in these dank environments.

CALENDAR

July 21-27—General Conference triennial sessions, Saskatoon, theme: "Thy Kingdom Come"

Sept. 25-28—Aid to Christian Teaching, Whiting, N.J.

Canada

July 4-8—Conference of Mennonites in Canada, Waterloo, Ont.

Northern

June 12-15—Northern District Conference, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Pacific

June 19-22—Pacific District Conference, Aurora, Ore.

Western

Oct. 17-19—Western District Conference, Wichita, Kan.

Ewys

B. Grasse

J. Grasse

Slonetsky

Thiede

WORKERS

James E. Bertsche, executive secretary for Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Elkhart, Ind., is retiring Aug. 31. He has served in this position since 1974. *Earl Roth*, AIMM missionary in Kinshasa, Zaire, has been appointed as the new executive secretary effective Sept. 1.

Lester and *Winifred Ewy*, First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., have begun a term with MCC U.S. serving as farm community issues coordinators. They are the first to serve in this new position, jointly sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Economic Development Associates and MCC U.S.

Betty and *John Grasse*, Ephrata, Pa., left April 27 for a three-year term of service under the auspices of the Commission on Overseas Mission/AIMM. After a year of French language and tropical medicine studies in Brussels, they will begin their medical assignment in Kalonda, Zaire.

Dianne Harder, a student at Grace College of the Bible, Omaha, Neb., who is from Mountain Lake, Minn., will spend two months working in the area of medical records at Hospital Vozandes-Quito, operated by HCJB World Radio in Quito, Ecuador.

Cecilia Leon has moved from New York to Chicago to assist in Hispanic Ministries sponsored by General Conference Mennonite Church. A bilingual interpreter, she will work for Marco Guete, secretary for Hispanic Ministries and pastor at Comunidad de Fe.

Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., has announced the following appointments: *Ron Mathies* as full-time director of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies effective July 1; *Sue Steiner* as interim chaplain effective in July, filling a vacancy created by the sabbatical leave of *John Rempel*, who will be teaching in the Philippines; *Carol Ann Weaver* as a full-time assistant professor of music for three years effective July 1.

Waldo Neufeld, currently coordinator of Personnel and Administrative Services with MCC Canada, has been appointed executive director of MCC British Columbia, effective Jan. 1, 1987.

Christine Slonetsky, Little Trinity Anglican Church, Toronto, has begun a two-year MVS term as mediator and case manager for the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program in Fresno, Calif. Her parents are Bohdan and Michaeline Slonetsky of Don Mills, Ont.

Richard Arden Slotter has been named dean of academic affairs for Bluffton (Ohio) College effective Aug. 1. He is a 1954 graduate of Bluffton College, with a major in chemistry and a minor in math. His master and doctorate degrees are in chemistry from the University of Michigan.

Christine Thiede, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Torrington, Conn., has begun a two-year MVS term as case manager

ACT is the acronym for Aid to Christian Teaching, a new extended-weekend, hands-on experience for church school teachers and their superintendents, pastors and Christian education committee members. The "flagship" event for this new model will be Sept. 25-28 at America's Keswick, Inc., Whiting, N.J. June 25 is the deadline for applications. Tuition, board and room are $120 or $165 (U.S.), depending on accommodations. For more information contact Marianne Zuercher, Box 116, Souderton, PA 18964, (215) 723-5513.

Poverty, not scarcity, is the cause of hunger in Africa, and cheap food imports from the West are not the answer. That's the conclusion made by six British church development agencies who recently issued a report criticizing the European Economic Community's scheme to alleviate world hunger by increasing world food supplies and lowering world prices. The report says that cheap food imports and food aid from the West help to keep rural people poor by undermining domestic agriculture in many parts of Africa and Asia.

"Gandhi once said that 'means are the end in the making.' If he was right—and it is my firm conviction that he was—one stark, irrefutable, bottom-line fact emerges from last night's bombing [of Libya by the United States]. The vast moral gulf which once separated us from the terrorists was narrowed yesterday." (Sen. Mark Hatfield, Oregon, in the *Congressional Record*, April 15, S4280-1)

Wilson

and alcohol counselor for the North of Market Senior Alcohol Services in San Francisco. She received her bachelor's degree in history from the University of Connecticut in Storrs. Her parents are Harry and Lillian Thiede of Stratford, Conn.

Mark Wiens and *Alberta Rensberger* were commissioned for their work at Silverwood Church, Goshen, Ind., Feb. 16. Wiens serves as associate minister; Rensberger serves in visitation and counseling ministries.

Alleis Wilson, Moencopi (Ariz.) Fellowship, has begun a two-year MVS term as a community health worker in Moencopi. She received an R.N. degree from Community College of Beaver County, Monaca, Pa.

Mennonite Collegiate Institute has an opening as of **June 1** for a
- business administrator

and has openings in **September** for teachers in
- music
- boys' physical education
- girls' physical education
- French
- physics and mathematics.

Please send resume to:
Allan Dueck, principal
MCI
Box 250
Gretna, MB R0G 0V0
(204) 327-5891.

Pastor needed

Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a pastor commencing in September or as soon as possible thereafter.

Both male and female candidates will be considered. This could also be a shared position.

For further information or to apply contact:
Allan J. Klassen
Chairman, Search Committee
909 East Centre
Saskatoon, SK S7J 2Z9
(306) 373-2260.

Job openings

Director, skill trainer and **direct-care staff** are needed at **Oregon Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.**, (group homes for developmentally disabled adults).

Send inquiries to:
Jane Toews
Teaching Research
345 Monmouth Ave.
Monmouth, OR 97361
(503) 838-1220, ext. 401.

Position available

Director for residential home for four developmentally disabled adults in Fresno, Calif. Live-in with seminary/college student assistants.

For more information, contact:
Duane Heffelbower
Central California Mennonite Residential Services, Inc.
1010 G St.
Reedley, CA 93654
(209) 638-6911.

Position available

Spruce Lake Retreat has an opening for a **food service director**. Spruce Lake Retreat is a Christian retreat center and camp owned by Franconia Mennonite Camp Association, located in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. This is a salaried, year-round position with housing and other benefits provided.

Contact:
Paul Beiler, Administrator
Spruce Lake Retreat
Route 1, Box 605
Canadensis, PA 18325
(717) 595-7505.

MVS associate director

Mennonite Voluntary Service is seeking an associate director to administer units in the western United States beginning **Aug. 1**.

Requires:
—commitment to Christian service
—excellent communications skills
—strong administrative abilities
—willingness to travel extensively.

Prior service experience is preferred.

Apply to:
Mennonite Voluntary Service
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

MVS is a project of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

“It has been good to be here and see North Americans working to meet needs in their own communities and country. It is also right for me to return to my own country. It is right that folks work in their own countries looking after their own injustices.”

Adele Kirsten, MCC exchange visitor from South Africa

Learning from those with whom we work.

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street
Box M
Akron, PA 17501

MCC Canada
201-1483 Pembina Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8

Proposed resolution on sexuality

Several General Conference congregations have asked for a GC statement on sexuality to be considered at the triennial sessions in Saskatoon July 21-27. The General Board prepared the following resolution, taking into account the study by the Joint Committee on Human Sexuality. Responses from some 18 congregations were also considered in drafting the resolution. Members who have not yet studied the book are urged to do so in preparation for discussion at Saskatoon of the proposed resolution.

We receive with gratitude the report of the Joint Committee on Human Sexuality. Their work was commissioned by action of the General Board of the General Conference, which asked the committee to initiate a study process in the congregations on homosexuality within the context of human sexuality.

Their report has now been received in the form of *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life: a Working Document for Study and Dialogue.* The study process envisioned has already begun.

Let us as congregations of the General Conference Mennonite Church acknowledge the committee's work in the following acts of affirmation, confession and covenant.

Our Affirmation

We affirm that sexuality is a good and beautiful gift of God, a gift of identity and a way of being in the world as male and female.

We affirm that we can feel positive about our bodies and our sexuality because we know our Creator.

We affirm that sexual drives are a real part of our lives but that the satisfaction of those drives is not the chief good in life.

We affirm both the goodness of singleness and the goodness of marriage and family in the Lord.

Our Confession

We confess that our sexual attitudes and practices too often fall far short of the biblical standards. No one can boast of perfection in this area.

We repent of our wrong view of the body, which keeps us from speaking openly and honestly about our bodies, including our sexual nature.

We repent of our judgmental attitudes and our slowness to forgive each other when we fail, a sign of lack of compassion.

We repent of our lack of compassion for those who struggle with their sexual orientation.

We repent of permissiveness, which too often leads to premarital and extramarital sexual relationships.

We repent of our failure to maintain healthy and growing marriages.

Our Covenant

We covenant with each other to study the Bible together and expand our insight into the biblical teachings relating to sexuality. We understand the Bible to teach that sexual intercourse is reserved for a man and a woman united in marriage and that violation of this teaching is sin. It is our understanding that this teaching also precludes homosexual as well as premarital and extramarital sexual activity. We further understand the Bible to teach the sanctity of the marriage covenant and that any violation of this covenant, including spouse abuse, is sin.

We covenant with each other to mutually bear the burden of remaining in loving dialogue with each other in the body of Christ, recognizing that we are all sinners in need of God's grace and that the Holy Spirit may lead us to further truth and repentance. We covenant compassion and prayer for each other that distrustful, broken and sinful relationships may experience God's healing.

We covenant with each other to take part in the ongoing search for discernment and for openness to each other. As a part of the nurture of individuals and congregations we will promote congregational study of the complex issues of sexuality, through Bible study and the use of *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life: a Working Document for Study and Dialogue.*

A discipleship of equals

Elaine Sommers Rich

"Elaine, please help the women in my church." This fervent plea from a sister in Nebraska rang in my inner ear until I wrote the following words:

Christianity is a discipleship of equals. Jesus' words, such as "follow me" and "go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." were given for *all* his followers. Not for a moment do I believe that the commands and teachings of Jesus apply to males but not to females. Mennonite women should claim their full heritage as disciples of Christ and be at work in his kingdom. Not to do so is sin.

What a radical gospel Jesus brought! In the new community Jews and gentiles are equal. So are slaves and masters. Unheard of! So are men and women. So are educated Greeks and unlettered barbarians.

Jesus once had a deep discussion with an outcast Samaritan woman at noon. Alone! Although shocked, perhaps horrified, his male disciples respected him too highly to question his integrity. Christianity is an agent of profound cultural change.

All through the four Gospels we read the phrase "and the women." Why aren't the women named? Well, some of them are. Jesus' mother, Mary. Mary and Martha of Bethany. Mary Magdalene. Joanna. Others are designated by such phrases as "a Syrophenician woman" or "a woman of Samaria" or "Peter's wife's mother."

I have noticed that everything ever written has been filtered through at least one human brain. Men writing history have often omitted the names of women. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, inspired by the Holy Spirit to be sure, were nevertheless culturally conditioned men. Isn't it wonderful that they recorded the witness of the women on Easter morning? If a woman disciple wrote a gospel about Jesus, it obviously did not make it into the canon of the New Testament.

Once a well-known Swiss Bible scholar came to Japan. He gave a lecture on the book of Mark. I was the only woman and the only "Westerner" there. The other people were Japanese men, most of them professors at the two nearby theological seminaries. I knew them all. I had worked on committees with several of them. I had spent hours in church council meetings with two of them. Yet not one of those brothers greeted me or spoke to me. I might as well have been invisible. I felt snubbed. I felt terrible. Later, what had happened dawned on me like a light being switched on. They were protecting their reputations with one another. They did not dare admit to one another that they would speak to "a foreign woman." They were Christians, but they were also Japanese men shaped by centuries of Japanese culture. When I understood what was going on psychologically and sociologically, I could forgive them.

Already back in 1973, when Billy Graham was in Seoul, Korea, special women's meetings were held to encourage their active participation. Here, Ruth Graham (left) speaks to several thousand women at EWHA University in Seoul.

Christianity is an agent of profound change. What a turmoil it caused in the ancient world! Paul was soon cautioning the Corinthian women not to act so "free." Elise Boulding in *The Underside of History* says that the ferocity of Roman persecution of Christians in those early centuries was caused not so much by worship of a "new god" as by the threat that the freedom of Christian women caused to the old Roman patriarchal family structures.

When I read the apostle Paul's letters, I look not only to his prescriptive words but also to his facts. "Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa" (Romans 16:12). Those are feminine names. "And I ask you also, true yokefellows, help these women, for they have labored side by side with me in the gospel" (Philippians 4:3). Side by side with the great apostle Paul? Certainly. They were no doubt also great apostles. I wish we knew more about them, but we don't. "Give my greetings to the brethren at Laodicea and to Nympha and the church that meets in her house" (Colossians 4:15). Is there a woman in your community that has a church meeting in her house?

How did a system where powerful bishops exercised strong authority over people, as in the old Catholic church, ever develop? It is a system we do not accept. I find nothing about a "chain of command" in the teachings of Jesus. The term smacks of slavery or of the army.

Women should not allow pagan, unchristian, patriarchal forces to keep them from using their gifts in the work of the Lord. It is not right to say, "No, I cannot be the Sunday school superintendent *because I am a woman.*" All of us, men and women, educated and uneducated, should be active in the Lord's work, responsive to God's call, whatever it may be.

Elaine Sommers Rich, 112 S. Spring St., Bluffton, OH 45817, is a well-known Mennonite writer.

Why didn't they tip the tub?

Katie Funk Wiebe

"What do you think of *all this*?" the man waiting by the church door asked me. The question surprised me. I didn't know him and he didn't know me. What difference did it make to him what I thought of the Wichita (Kan.) Churches United for Peacemaking conference we were both attending?

"Your comment at the apartheid workshop made me think you were informed about all this," he said. Again, a reference to "all this." "All this" included addresses on aspects of Christian peacemaking, including the spiritual basis for getting involved in nuclear arms control and the politics of prayer; workshops on prayer, apartheid, colonialism, world hunger, the sanctuary movement, Star Wars and environmental stewardship.

Working through "all this." I told him I had come to learn. That I was a member of a historic peace church in which some members were not fully convinced of this position. That I was working my way through the nuclear arms issue and other matters. That I recognized that prejudice is often rooted in our theology. The man, a lawyer, admitted to a similar pilgrimage. He was also working his way through "all this."

I think someone needs to ask us occasionally what we think of "all this." Nuclear war is terrifying to contemplate. I wasn't at the conference to learn how to demonstrate. I wasn't there to go over the biblical basis for non-resistant love. I had gone to find out whether, like the people in Nazi Germany, I am being blind to something so huge I can't see it for looking.

Jim Douglass, organizer of the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, reiterated, "One must see evil to respond to it. We have to see the crisis to be open to it." He mentioned that a relative of one of the more than 900 people who drank the fatal poison in the Jonestown massacre several years ago had asked, "Why didn't someone tip over the tub of cyanide-laced Kool-Aid?" That simple act might have saved hundreds of lives.

Why didn't someone reach out and dump the tub?

Possibly, and probably, because that someone had never even tipped over a thimble before.

Like many of us?

Yes, I think so. We tell ourselves that when the crisis comes, when people's lives are seriously threatened by sin and evil, we will rush heroically into the turmoil and with great spiritual strength push over tub after tub, freeing people from sin's domination.

We think sin will invade our lives and nation like an army. But Satan doesn't work that way. Sin moves into our lives slowly, gently, easily, until we're so used to it we feel comfortable with all aspects of it—big and small. When the tub of poison is finally sitting in front of us, we don't recognize it for what it is and we're gripped by a paralysis of will. Instead of action, we're ready with alibis:

- What will people think if I should speak out loudly against what I consider a serious wrong in our society at this moment? To speak out might harm the business prospects of this community.
- It's the job of politicians to set things straight and to make rules for people to live by.
- Pastors should lead out against sin and evil and show the rest of us the way.
- It's the job of men, not women and young people, to settle serious issues. They're the ones who should start tipping the tub.
- Non-resistant love isn't part of my theology just now. I believe Christ calls us to evangelism and missions, not to fighting evil in systems and structures. These non-resisters don't talk my language.
- I simply don't do peace (or tip tubs—or wash windows).

The tub is in front of us. Douglass' point was that the tub of cyanide is sitting in front of us now in the form of the massive stockpiling of nuclear arms. His method of tipping the tub is not through hostile demonstrations but by learning to know the enemy and then establishing community with them and other concerned Christians.

He used the story of the Good Samaritan, a person despised by the Jews because of his cultural background, who rescued the man in the ditch. Jesus' use of the term "Good Samaritan" will have been as revolting to the Jews then as a parable of a "Good Communist" might be today.

We cannot change evil or injustice from the outside, Douglass said. People whose livelihood is dependent on the arms-buildup economy feel judged when pacifists demonstrate around them. So he and others are attempting to make friends with the members of the Trident nuclear submarine base near Seattle by living next door to it.

"Unless we recognize the presence of God in the people who oppose us, we have no business being involved in non-resistant efforts."

Christians in Germany after World War II asked themselves why they had been blind to the growing evil in their nation. I think I went to the conference in the hope I need never share the Germans' hindsight.

Katie Funk Wiebe, 103 East B, Hillsboro, KS 67063, is a well-known writer and an instructor at Tabor College.

LETTERS

Who sinned?

The March 11 issue with LaVonne Platt's article "Farm Crises Are Threads in a Fabric" came to my desk at the same time as the March 31 international *Newsweek* with the headline "The Rice War: Too Much Food and Still Too Much Hunger."

I found LaVonne's article exciting. Most Christians agree that they wish to have all areas of their lives in line with God's laws. But to actually come together and begin exploring, collectively, how to respond to economic crisis and to study the reasons for the crisis seems to be a possibility of new discovery and discipleship.

On the other hand, *Newsweek* reported the sad statistics of plenty of food in government storehouses while at the same time citizens were starving because they cannot afford to buy the grain. As one example, *Newsweek* tells of mountains of jute sacks full of grain in the Punjab of India while 180 miles south in Rajasthan emaciated men, women and children trek across dry land in search of water, food and jobs. In less stark contrast the same is true in North America. Clearly something is wrong, something is unjust—and God hates injustice.

I would encourage farmers and the Mennonite churches to use this time to expose and discuss the root cause of suffering for themselves and their fellow farmers all over the world. Graber's and Regier's observations of farm policy and defense policy are a good place to start. We must not settle for temporary quick fixes such as the U.S. Food Security Act. If *Newsweek* is correct, the Asian farmers will bear the brunt of America's subsidized grain dumping on the world market. The threads of America's agriculture community extend all over the world. We Christians have a unique role in understanding the responsibilities of being world citizens under God.

Recently we came upon the scene where moments before an infant girl was drowned by her parents. They could not care for another child, especially a girl. Who sinned? The girl's parents? These poor people did not have access to enough of the world's resources to care for themselves. We have fashioned or allowed economic systems in our world that allow some to get much rice and others to suffer and sometimes die. I came away from the murder scene feeling partially responsible.

I believe it is time to boldly proclaim the Good News of God's love and justice. We must study ways and begin establishing a new economic order in our communities. It is true we are controlled by economic and political forces beyond our control. But small, even symbolic initial steps can and must be made. *Mark Keller, United Mission to Nepal, Box 126, Kathmandu, Nepal*

April 15

Discuss *The Mennonite*

The adult Sunday school class at Jubilee Mennonite Church has decided to use *The Mennonite* as the focus for discussion for classes in May and June. We find that there are many articles and news items which would lend themselves to group discussion and interaction. *Ernie Hildebrand, Box 1268, Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4*

April 24

The Marketplace

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film

The painful truth

The Official Story, *directed by Luis Puenzo, written by Luis Puenzo and Aida Bortnik*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, assistant editor

Is the history written in books what really happened? This is not just an academic question. As this film demonstrates, it can be a question of life and death.

The Official Story was made in Argentina after the downfall of the military government. It tells the story of Alicia (Norma Aleandro), a high school history teacher in Buenos Aires who is ignorant of her own country's recent events. While thousands have vanished in the night, to be tortured or murdered, she and her prosperous executive husband (Hector Alterio) enjoy their bourgeois life with no questions asked. Then Ana (Chunchuna Villafane), an old friend of Alicia's, visits her after seven years in exile. Ana tells of her arrest and torture, then mentions that many of the infants of the *desaparecidos* (those who were "disappeared") were given away to friends of the government.

Alicia, unable to have children, is the mother of an adopted girl. She begins a quest to learn if her beloved 5-year-old Gaby is one of these stolen children. Slowly, painfully, she pursues the truth that may destroy everything she holds dear—marriage, motherhood, peace of mind.

The emotional impact of the film is stunning, due largely to an intelligent, understated script and the powerful performance of Aleandro. The themes of justice, history as memory, and family solidarity are explored on various levels. Each character is finely drawn. In the end one even sympathizes with the fascist husband.

The Official Story won this year's Oscar for best foreign film. This is a well-deserved honor and the film is well worth seeing.

MEDITATION

There is strength in quietness

By its very nature noise attracts attention to itself. We live with a certain amount of noise daily. Yet certain noises disturb us. For some it may be the roar of a jet as it gains altitude over their home. For another the cry of a child may demand immediate attention. The ringing of a doorbell or a gong, the growl of a lawnmower, the staccato harshness of a jackhammer all intrude on our consciousness. Still, who can claim there is more power in noise than in quietness?

Blowing your own horn may be more an indication of your vanity than of your real worth. The clatter of pennies or nickels in the offering plate make more noise than a check for $100.

Being a noisy person is not the epitome of perfection. Think of all the things that are done in quietness. Yeast issues hardly a whisper, yet we know that it can pop the lid off a container when the yeast works inside. In spring the swelling seeds burst their outer skins and quietly thrust their way through the soil. If that action were noisy, the world would be an endless din in springtime.

No sound comes from a loaf of bread in the oven, but the bread comes from the oven changed from how it went in. A powerful pump works quietly inside your body to provide blood, oxygen and other nourishments to various parts of your body. The person sitting beside you in the pew doesn't hear the heart at work. A quiet prayer said in intercession for someone who needs added help or guidance—who can measure its strength?

The choir may sing loudly—virtually raising the rafters, as it were—yet by its contrast the hushed soft passage can often be more meaningful than the loud strident clamor. It is easy to sing loudly; to sing softly takes much greater control.

A child learns how to "tune out" a parent's yelling, but whisper in the ear of a child and you'll be surprised at the child's attentiveness.

We remember Elijah, who fled from the wrath of Jezebel after defeating the prophets of Baal. God did not come to Elijah in the boisterous earthquake, the roaring blaze or the howling wind but in the still, small voice.

Maybe it will only be God who is aware of a quiet deed done in secret. A handclasp truly meant, a gentle kiss for a child who's been naughty, a thoughtful message to one who grieves—these have power.

God sent his Son not to the sound of a trumpet fanfare in the palace but in the quiet dimness of a stable. His birth, life, death and resurrection changed the world.

How often have you heard someone yell, "I love you"? This phrase is usually associated with a soft whisper, spoken in shy, gentle tones, but it transforms and brightens the one who hears it.

Perhaps the most powerful force on earth is love. This is manifested most often in quiet ways. Do not despise the "quiet" in the land. We have only to think of the words of Isaiah 30:15, where we read, "For the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, says, Only in returning to me and waiting for me will you be saved; in quietness and confidence is your strength."

Be still and know that God's love still envelops us.

Helen Friesen

CONTENTS

God created people as male and female. Throughout church history Christians have debated the meaning of gender. Is one superior, the other inferior? Is one created to lead, the other to be always follower?

This issue takes a candid and frank look at the topic. From interviews to opinions to history to exegesis to a father facing the fact that his daughter is in seminary.

We hope it helps you do some fresh and creative thinking and praying to see God's will.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Women in our churches

The case for male headship and female submission—in both the biological and the spiritual families—is often based on the creation. And the assumption is that Genesis 2:18-23 is more fundamental than Genesis 1:26-27. Genesis 1 tells us God's original creation includes male and female—woman and man. Genesis 2 tells God first made Adam; Eve was later constructed out of his rib.

The Old Testament stories are dominated by male authority figures. There are women too, almost from the start. Sarai has an important role in the call and covenant with Abram. Rebekah plays a key role in passing on the covenant promise. Rachel, Leah and Bilhah warrant considerable space in Genesis. Women are key actors in the unfolding drama, but they are usually upstaged by men in the overall scenario.

The New Testament startles us by Jesus' example. He excludes no one who wishes to follow him: tax collectors, prostitutes, lepers, even the hated Roman military. And to the chagrin of his closest 12, he opens the circle to include people "casting out demons" (Mark 9:38-40) and children (Mark 10:13-16).

Jesus rebuked any attempts to suggest that God's kingdom people were not equal. In him a new order was begun (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In the church's history we have never been able to agree on what Jesus' new style of inclusiveness and egalitarianism means. The split, in this case, has also never been clearly evangelical-liberal. Some of the evangelical denominations have had women pastors from their beginnings. Some of the large mainline denominations are experiencing intense inner turmoil over ordination of women.

Mennonites have been caught in the middle. Like the rest, we too found it acceptable to have women give leadership in overseas churches. And we sent more women than men. But we never thought through what this meant for overseas Christians or for missionaries coming back home.

The General Conference has been the most ready to give women and men equal status. By 1983 our General Board—the top administrative body of the conference—was 50 percent women. The program commissions are all at 25 percent or more women.

But disagreement over women's ordination and leadership in our congregations is still strong, even to the point of threatening division.

It is time to stop arguing over this issue and to examine these truths and their meanings for our day: (1) *People are able to mount strong biblical evidence for and against total inclusiveness.* The challenge is to examine what it means that God created us different—male and female. (2) *God created male and female to become mutually fulfilling.* Can mutuality be maintained without role differences? What are the bottom-line meanings of mutuality? (3) *God presents himself in a male image but sometimes with characteristics we traditionally assign as distinctly masculine and sometimes with characteristics we traditionally assign as distinctly feminine.* What does this say about personhood? Why have we often rigidly separated the one from the other?

To start the discussion, here is one challenge. I'll listen to anyone who suggests there should be no male-female distinctions if you can show me a man who has given birth. Until such a time, I believe God created us different for many good reasons. And whatever we do, let's not attempt to erase that difference. Much of life's meaning is found in this God-given mutuality. God in his gracious mercy gives us the choice to enjoy these blessings or to deny them.

Let's begin to try understanding male-female differences and go on from there. *Bernie Wiebe*

Saskatoon '86 reports

This issue includes the reports for the 1983-86 triennium and projections for 1986-89. Read them carefully. Thank God for what has been done and pray for what needs to be done.

These reports can help you give guidance for the future. Attend the Saskatoon sessions and speak your convictions. If you can't attend, write your comments to the staff at *Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Your staff is accountable to you and to God. You are accountable to God and to your staff. There is a mutual responsibility that rests upon all of us together. Let's try to serve faithfully. *BW*

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Mennonite Biblical Seminary issue

Culturally capable Christians

Culturally capable Christians

An emphathic awareness of the exact modes of many cultures is itself a liberation from them as prisons. As we sift out the best from each culture, we begin to arrive at some common essentials that link us all together.

David Augsburger

"One who knows but one culture, knows no culture."

We are born into culture as we are born to the atmosphere of planet Earth. The biosphere welcomes us, surrounds us, sustains us. It makes life possible, even as it nourished and supported those who gave us birth. Yet as our life-giving atmosphere is invisible to us until we meet another (a smoke-filled room, a smog-clouded city or a temple filled with incense), so culture becomes visible on the boundary, in comparison, in contrast.

Anyone who knows only one culture, knows no culture. In coming to know a second or a third culture one discovers how much that was taken to be reality is actually an interpretation of realities that are seen in part and known in part. One begins to understand that many things assumed to be universal are local, thought to be absolute are relative, seen as simple are complex. One finds that culture shapes what we perceive, how we perceive it, and which perceptions will be retained and utilized. One realizes that culture defines what is valued, which values will be central and which less influential.

Knowing another culture may free one from or it may freeze one to the culture of origin. When the knowledge of contrasting perspectives shatters illusions and perforates old boundaries, the collision of cultures may forge new central commitments which weld old assumptions into new patterns or paradigms. But the encounter with another culture can result in freezing old boundaries, in confirming biases, in asserting the superiority of one's own assumptions, thus reinforcing the culture encapsulation of an unexamined world view. Cultural values held as central commitments can free the person and provide a flexible resilience. Cultural views maintained as external boundaries isolate and encapsulate the individual.

If we are to continue life on this planet, we cannot exist within isolated cultural, national and racial boundaries. Industrialization, the communications revolution, the exploding population and the resultant economic interdependency of all nations have brought us to the point where we are indispensable to one another across all boundaries. This awareness is dawning on us slowly and has not yet permeated education, psychology and obviously not political science, although it is already self-evident in the world of economics. The old nationalism, we are coming to recognize, is an obsolete residue of 19th-century romanticism that is of no help in the emerging interdependent world. A new nationalism that expresses the people's longing to live self-directed political lives in concert with other nations, to direct their economic and social improvement in cooperation with other nations, to protect their interests against any imperialism from other nations, is emerging. Ethnic, cultural, religious and racial backgrounds can become heritages to be prized, protected, nourished, cherished as guides for lifestyle but not as boundaries, barriers or blocks to communication and cooperation between peoples.

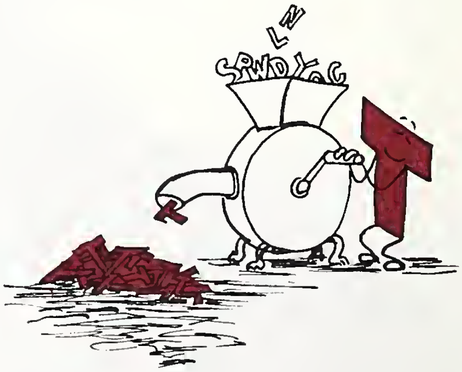
Every discipline must contribute to this movement from a mutually exclusive world of competing nations to an inclusive world of collaborating peoples. The snail's pace of ideological change, compared to the rapid shifts in technological and economic realms, must incite us to revolutionary thinking and excite radical caring about the future of humankind. Pastoral theology and pastoral counseling have barely begun to think about the contribution they can offer from their standpoint at the conjunction of psychology, psychotherapy, theology, philosophy, ethics, missiology, sociology and anthropology.

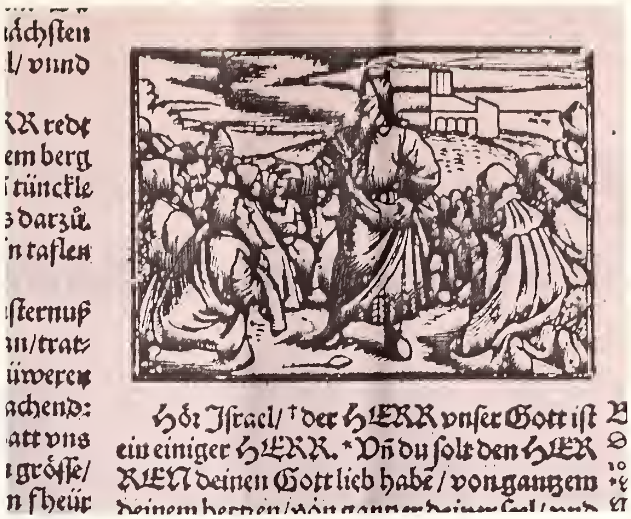
This is a time for pastoral theologians to claim the unique vantage point offered by their integrative stance and multi-disciplinary training and vision. It is a crucial position for contributing to the central agenda of our age. It must begin with a shift of paradigm and a broadened model of the culturally capable minister or counselor.

The ability to join another in his or her culture while fully owning one's own requires a broadened vision of the task of facilitating human growth and healing. Counseling and ministry skills within a culture are not sufficient. Cultural skills that transcend and thus can participate in transforming culture are equally crucial.

Culturally capable people are distinguished by the following measurable and teachable characteristics which protect them in ministry from being culturally oppressive.

Culturally aware people have a clear understanding of their own values and basic assumptions. They recognize which human behaviors they view as appropriate or inappropriate, desirable or undesirable, life enhancing or destructive. They are fully aware that others may hold values and assumptions which are different and legitimate even when they are directly





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ein einiger HERR. * Vñ du ſolt den HER
RREN deinen Gott lieb habē / von gantzem

A facsimile (altered) of an old German Bible open to the Sh'ma: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one. . . ."

Seminary student Jock Tolmay illustrates his conviction that Moses probably would have felt quite at home delivering this basic tenet of our faith in the shadow of the seminary chapel.

opposite their own. This understanding has been internalized as both insight (beliefs) and awareness (experience).

For example: Inducing guilt with "You should feel guilty about refusing to obey your mother." Or suppressing a counselee's communications with "You should not talk about this." But in the two most effective and widely recognized counseling theories of Japan, guilt induction and suppression of communication are central methodologies.

Culturally aware people have a capacity for welcoming, entering into and prizing other world views without negating their legitimacy. Cultural awareness goes beyond empathy which assumes a common cultural base and feels at home on the boundary between world views. We can enter into another's world, savor its distinctness and prize its differentness while holding clearly to the uniqueness of our own.

For example: One who assumes "that people ought to become autonomous individuals as they mature toward adulthood" may bracket these values while listening to a member of a culture in which family solidarity and a collective sense of personhood leads to a mature dependency within the family unit. Seeking to inculcate Western individualism as a means of increasing autonomy violates the integrity of the person and his or her system. Integrity—the integrating core of the person—is what makes autonomy a desirable characteristic to begin with.

Culturally aware people seek sources of influence in both the person and context, both the individual instance and the environment. Having come to appreciate the impact of historical, social, religious, political and economic forces that have shaped the identity and values of all human beings, they are sensitive to the effects of racism, economic exploitation, political oppression, historic tragedy, religious prejudice or the absence of these on the person's personality or interpersonal adjustment. The action *and* the actors, the behavior *and* the context, the particular counseling interaction *and* the cultural environment must be seen, understood and respected.

For example: To someone from another context, the first contact with a Palestinian Arab may suggest strong paranoid formation, decided anti-Semitism, and radical loss of control of self and personal environment. Empathy may reveal that the persecutory ideas are related to the recent confiscation of his home by Israeli settlers, the imprisonment of his son for accepting a scholarship to study law in Jordan. His "anti-Semitism" is not generalized and racial but specific complaints against certain people, offices and acts of discriminatory practice; the loss of control is found to be actual and the sense of impotence a correct appraisal since he has no recourse for any of these perceived injustices.

Culturally aware people are able to move beyond counseling theory, orientation or technique and be effective humans. They are truly inclusive, not in a random selection of techniques that work, but in a disciplined flexibility which allows them to select a particular set of counseling skills in a considered decision about its appropriateness to the life experience of the particular counselee. They can be critical of each methodology, theory and orientation, recognizing that no theory of ministry is politically or morally neutral.

For example: A counselor who sees an American couple may choose to be non-interpretive and offer primarily experiences and exercises for their mutual discovery of self and other. When asked for evaluation, the counselor may return the question and elicit their awareness of what has occurred and ask for their insight into its meaning. In the next hour the same counselor may see an Oriental couple to be interpretive, directive and behaviorally focused. To the Oriental couple, the exercises, experiences and the refusal to interpret would be seen as disinterest, as being cold and aloof.

Culturally aware people seek to be universal citizens, related to all humans as well as distinct from all others. They live in the world, not just in their own community or country. Aware as they are of what is culture-bound and class-bound, they refuse to allow what is local to be valued as universal. The world is their home; humankind has become their kind. Thus they prize differences as well as similarities, uniqueness as well as commonality. Recognizing that enemy-love is the central pastoral task of this century, they hold cultures in respect that are antithetical to their own at points of high value. They extend understanding to nations whose actions are hostile to their own native country.

For examples we may look to black pastoral counselors in Zimbabwe who offered care to revolutionary and loyalist alike while holding their own convictions about justice. Or to pastoral counselors in South Africa who live on the boundary, recognizing that maintaining trust with either one or both sides is a fragile process that is only possible for a time. Yet they offer care to people regardless of race or their oppressed place in society. They are not alone. In Latin America, South America, India, Southeast Asia, the Muslim states, Russia and countries new and old, pastoral care crosses over boundaries and brings people to oneness within and with each other.

Pastoral people, of all those concerned about care-giving, must capture the vision of becoming a "third culture" that bridges, connects, clarifies and makes people freer to truly meet. Twenty years ago Marshall McLuhan envisioned this creatively in these words: "Hitherto most people have accepted their cultures as fate, like climate or vernacular; but our empathic awareness of the exact modes of many cultures is itself a liberation from them as prisons. We can now live not just amphibiously in divided and distinguished worlds but in many worlds and cultures simultaneously. We are no more committed to one culture—to a single ratio among the human senses—than to one book or language or technology. Compartmentalizing of human potential by single cultures will soon be as absurd as specialism in subject or discipline has become." (Excerpted from *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures*, Westminster, 1986—in press.) •

A word for Christians in the United States and Canada

Matlejoane J. Masemola

At Masemola village where I come from in South Africa we have a saying that a passerby is likely to give an unbiased verdict in disputes where people are at a dead end. I share my views with brothers and sisters as a sojourner among Mennonites in the United States and Canada.

Born in South Africa, I had my first contact with Mennonites by radio. I listened to J. Otis Yoder, now of Breezewood, Pa., on *Hope for Today* through Trans World Radio, Manzini, Swaziland. Through a lengthy correspondence I ended up studying Bible at Rosedale Bible Institute, Irwin, Ohio. Then I transferred to Goshen (Ind.) College. In 1985 I began studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. Most of my experience has been within the Conservative Mennonite Conference, though through Goshen College and AMBS I'm getting to know something about the wider Mennonite church. Headcoverings, which the women in the Conservative Mennonite Conference wear, gave me an impression of something close to Catholicism. Studying within the various Mennonite circles, I got a fuller picture of what and who Mennonites are. The church is basically trying to live what the Bible suggests we should live. Whatever the church does is in one way or other in line with biblical teaching, though it is not necessarily following the whole biblical teaching as faithfully as it might.

I see the church trying to be a good witness to God. In this endeavor the church is ripped by innumerable schisms that don't seem to end except by division. From what I've observed and what I've read and am still reading, the Mennonite churches are plagued by divisions, yet God is working within.

There are certain enduring characteristics that the Mennonite churches, even in this divided state, have maintained. They are committed to a Christian peace witness. The efforts to be a peace witness marked their birth in the early 16th century. Not only is the church committed to peace but also to strong biblical teaching. It does not have so-called systematic theology, rigid doctrinal statements, rigid extra-biblical tenets and so on, but is characterized by continuous growth and change rooted in the Bible. These characteristics, and others I yet know little of, mark a forward movement in and toward the kingdom to come, a kingdom in which all creatures will live in peace and harmony, where misery and chaos are overruled.

From what I've observed, I'd say the church needs to mend her ways here and there in her pilgrimage. While different opinions and interpretations will be part of the church's internal life, indifference and schismatics are outside Christ's perfection (to use an early Anabaptist epigram). Let the church know that it is possible for the eye to see good food, for the full stomach to crave it, but for the conscience to object to gluttony. This is just one example of a body with different parts, fulfilling different roles but not being indifferent to the parts that object to wrong perceptions of the other.

If the church could pay attention to members with different perceptions and try to work in harmony with those parts, then its impact on this troubled world would be astonishing. That does not guarantee a smooth, blissful life, but the gospel of Christ would find a superb medium to reach the world. That medium is the church-in-harmony with itself and its members. It should be remembered that Jesus hasn't given up on the church despite its mistakes. Thus it's for the church to use this opportunity.

With me equally marred by flaws, I do not want to point fingers at the church. I only have a word of encouragement. Keep up the good work in faith: preach and practice peace, hold biblical teaching above all others, continue reaching out to the downtrodden and forgotten, give more generously instead of heaping up wealth, live in unity and, above all, make disciples of all nations. This is a part of the Anabaptist vision: that all should be one in harmony and in Christ.

Somehow the Mennonite churches must translate Menno's teachings more clearly into today's world.

Joseph Masemola, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, is in the peace studies program. From South Africa, he studied previously at Rosedale Bible Institute, Irwin, Ohio, and Goshen (Ind.) College.

To Emmaus and back—Luke 24:13-35

Daniel Schipani

I invite you to look at the resurrection narrative of the journey to Emmaus from the perspective of the teaching ministry of the church.

What do we perceive when we read this story again not only with the eyes of faith but particularly from the vantage point of Christian education?

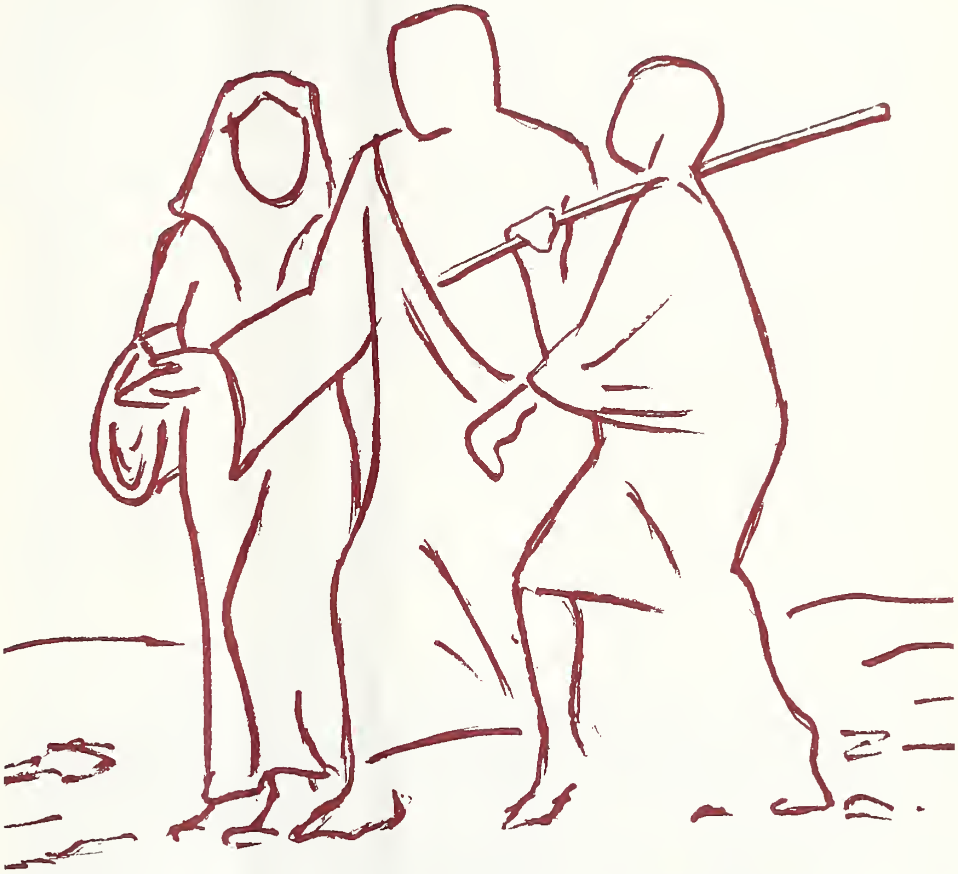
The Bible is essentially a faith awakening and nurturing text, a religious education book. Therefore a reading from the Christian education standpoint is not only appropriate but indispensable.

Obviously in this space we cannot do full justice to the rich and deep meaning of this passage. But this much we can suggest and indicate: *The story of the walk to Emmaus and the transforming encounter with the risen Christ illumines the church's educational ministry so that key principles can be identified as dependable guides to practice.* Please read the story carefully and spell out what is the primary message you hear from Luke 24:13-35. Then take a look at the educational principles indicated below:

Educational principles from Luke 24:13-35. (1) *The **disciples** face life's challenges and willingly struggle in search for resolution (sense of direction, light, hope, liberation).* They welcome the stranger and are open to dialogue and further learning by sharing their stories and visions. In the process they put faith into action by inviting the stranger to share a meal (he truly becomes their companion). They go back to Jerusalem (where the action is) recommitted to Christ and to their people.

2. *The **teacher** walks along with the disciples and enters into dialogue with them.* He encourages them to tell their stories and visions so that they become actively involved in the educational process. He provides resources for a new understanding of Scripture and the gospel of liberation. His teaching includes more than instruction (solidarity, fellowship).

3. *The **context** of this educational journey is multidimensional and changing.* It includes different places (Jerusalem, the road, Emmaus), diverse settings (fellowship, instruction, worship) and several environments (church, the street, home).

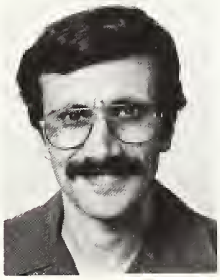


The teacher walks along with the disciples and enters into dialogue with them.

4. ***Process** and **content** (the how and what) are intimately related.* A rich and complex agenda becomes curriculum (current events, Scripture, people's needs and dreams). A variety of methods are employed to augment learning (questions, discussion-reflection, dialogue, exposition, dramatization). Diverse dimensions of personality are subjected to growth and transformation (mind, heart, will).

5. *The **purpose** of the educational journey is the (re)appropriation of the gospel of the kingdom of God for transformation and empowerment.* Worship is enhanced. Discipleship (faith nurturing) and community building are fostered. Mission is facilitated (the good news of liberation).

The Christian education teacher in 1986 can awaken or nurture the life-changing encounter with Christ by facing life's challenges and questions with other disciples, by continuing a daily walk and conversation with Jesus, by seeking learnings in multidimensional contexts, by relating the what and how questions with the students and by seeking the transformation and empowerment of people through the educational journey. Start now by retracing your steps through Luke 24:13-35. Jesus Christ lives.



Daniel Schipani is professor of Christian education and personality at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

General Conference projections for 1986-8

Introduction. The purpose of the General Conference Mennonite Church is to proclaim Jesus Christ through appropriate ministries throughout the world to the end that people may put their trust in God and receive Jesus Christ as Savior from the guilt and power of sin and serve him in the fellowship of the church; to assist congregations in Christian worship, nurture and witness; and together to understand more adequately the essence of the Christian faith and accept its implications for total living.

Working toward this purpose of building Christ's kingdom, the General Board urges that evangelization be the first priority. To evangelize is to share the good news of Jesus Christ by word and deed, calling people to accept salvation in Christ, and to form vital Christian communities of love and service to others in all the world.

Other goals for the next three years include teaching biblical principles, developing and training leadership (pastors, church planters, overseas and North American service workers) and achieving Christian unity. Congregations together with committees, boards and commissions of our conferences can individually and collectively work toward these goals.

Home Ministries: many peoples becoming God's people

In the Bible God calls many peoples to become God's people (Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 2:1-4; Ephesians 2:13-22; Revelation 5:10). The Commission on Home Ministries believes that God is challenging the General Conference Mennonite Church to respond to this vision with clearer commitment.

The glory of God is reflected in the mosaic of many peoples becoming God's people. The recent immigrants from Asia and Latin America, the native North Americans and people from African and European heritage give us an opportunity to anticipate another Pentecost (Acts 2) and experience more deeply the prayer of our Lord "that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:23).

Goals on the journey. The Commission on Home Ministries proposes that in implementing the General Board's four objectives (evangelize, develop leadership, seek Christian unity, teach biblical principles) we make (1) *evangelism* include a mosaic of ethnic and language churches more closely representing the proportion of these people in the Canadian and U.S. populations, (2) *leadership development* training opportunities more accessible to minority groups and scholarships available for current leaders to become bilingual, (3) the decision-making boards of our conferences, institutions and programs represent all ethnic and language groups in ways that help achieve *Christian unity*, and (4) our periodicals and curriculum publications *teach biblical principles* to the "many peoples" and reflect our multiethnic membership.

Commitment. We propose that during 1986-89 the Commission on Home Ministries consult with ethnic and language minority groups, church schools, camps, congregations, district and provincial conferences, boards and commissions about specific steps to help our conference be "many peoples becoming God's people." The findings and the cost would be presented at the 1989 triennial conference session.

While this consultation is going on we call ourselves to find ways to be a more inclusive conference without waiting for 1989 or financial support from the Development Plan. But if we also agree to a new level of witness and stewardship in the Development Plan, we call ourselves to go beyond those efforts that require little or no funding and commit ourselves to cross-cultural efforts that enable full participation by all peoples in God's family.

It "seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28) to issue this call as a venture of faith as all of us—individuals, families, congregations, district conferences and the General Conference Mennonite Church—seek the coming of Christ's kingdom.

(Note: This "Many Peoples Becoming God's People" statement is being made available in Spanish and Chinese.)

The Commission on Home Ministries proposes that during the next triennium we take specific steps to help our conference be "many peoples becoming God's people."

Education: embracing families and church community to make disciples

The Commission on Education is committed to increasing biblical understanding, strengthening the family, strengthening the church community and developing more effective disciples.

COE plans to publish more volumes in the Faith and Life Bible Studies series and develop another series that covers all the books of the Bible. The commission will continue to produce Sunday school curriculum that includes the Uniform Series in both German and English, Foundation Series curriculum from childhood through adulthood, and a new adult Foundation Series curriculum that addresses contemporary concerns from a Believers' Church perspective.

Strengthening the family will include equipping our congregations with leaders who will understand needs and resources within families. These leaders will train members of the congregation to minister to each other using study, discussion and prayer. We want to develop a model of family life ministry so that with it congregations will be able to chart their own direction and be examples to other congregations. We plan to have a major family life consultation in 1987. In addition to leadership training and development and providing sexuality resource materials, we continue our support for Mennonite Marriage Encounter.

To strengthen the church community the Commission on Education is planning a major educational consultation in 1987 for all provincial and district education committee members. We want to also continue our inter-Mennonite efforts of working together at youth and young adult ministries: a club curriculum for children, an Anabaptist Bible calendar, the Foundation Series network of resource people, the "It Matters Where You Scatter" list of contact people for young adult and church school education and a network of people serving Parenting for Peace and Justice. The youth council resources our district and provincial youth workers.

COE will continue to resource our congregations through the printed page (*Builder*, *With*, *in search*, *Feedback*, *The Encourager*, *Faith and Life News*, *Resource*) and through workshops (Project Teach, ACT weekends and a variety of others).

To develop more effective disciples we want to hire a full-time person in adult education to work at evangelism and nurture in the congregations. Goals include creating models of wholeness and shalom and developing materials for congregational leaders. We are publishing *Prepare for Peace* for children grades 1-8 to nurture a growing understanding of Christian pacifism. We emphasize mission both in North America and overseas by helping to produce a curriculum entitled *Neighbors Near and Far.* We plan to produce a book on shalom (the Bible's word for salvation, justice and peace). To help our young people follow Jesus we plan to produce a new church membership piece, *Invitation to Life.*

The Mennonite Service Venture program will encourage our youth to know that serving others is an essential expression of Christian faith. We aim to call people to lifetime service and facilitate that service of individuals and congregations. Youth Venture and Group Venture are the structures where teen-agers study the Bible together while performing a summer service assignment.

The Commission on Education is committed to all of these. As we look toward the coming of Christ's kingdom, your goals are our goals. Through our joint efforts, may there be an increase of biblical understanding, may families be strengthened, may the church community be served and may we all become more effective disciples.

The Commission on Education's commitment to strengthening the family includes equipping our congregations with leaders who will understand needs and resources within families.

Overseas mission goals fit with conference goals

Since 1900 when the General Conference sent its first overseas missionaries to India, over 1,000 men and women have served our conference in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Today about 150 missionaries are located in 17 countries serving Christ and the growing overseas churches.

During 1984-85 the Commission on Overseas Mission conducted a major program review. In September 1985 final discussion and discernment brought forth these working priorities for overseas work during the coming 10 years. They are organized here under the four overall goals of the conference.

Goal one: to evangelize. The Commission on Overseas Mission emphasizes evangelism and church planting. Three billion people have yet to come to faith in Jesus Christ and a meaningful relationship within a Christian church. The unfinished task is both immense and urgent. We plan to increase the number of missionaries to at least 30 percent whose primary role is evangelism and church planting. An increased focus will be on Latin America, where the opportunities and invitations to plant churches are numerous. Teams of missionaries and overseas church workers are envisioned to penetrate unreached peoples for a limited 10-year church planting thrust. The teams will then move on to new groups of unreached peoples.

The Commission on Overseas Mission intends to increase its ministry by building church communities in the urban centers of the world.

COM is emphasizing urban ministry. Our planet by the year 2000 will have 2,200 metropolises (over 100,000), 433 megacities (over 1 million), 79 supercities (over 4 million) and 24 supergiants (over 10 million). We need to increase ministry in the urban centers of the world. Cities like Bogotá, Tokyo, Kinshasa, Hong Kong and many others are current sites of mission involvement. In the future these cities and others will be the location for building church communities.

Our mission is a ministry of wholeness. We will continue to be a multiministry mission agency. Ministries of wholeness will address all forms of alienation: separation from God, poverty, injustice, disease. The wholeness of salvation in Jesus Christ meets the whole range of human needs.

Goal two: to teach biblical principles. Our congregations in North America need new vision and energy for missions. During the next decade the commission will work toward rekindling the mission vision in the churches of North America. Myths about missions must be exploded. The realities of ministry in a world often hostile to the Christian gospel must be explained. New and unique opportunities for involvement in and support of missions will emerge.

COM is making provision for theological reflection. Missionaries and overseas church leaders continue to confront issues and situations which need biblical and theologically faithful responses. The commission will also engage in research on issues arising out of missionary experience in an effort to be faithful to Jesus Christ and the missionary mandate.

Goal three: to train leaders. The Commission on Overseas Mission is responding to the need for leadership training. In most locations, especially in Africa, the church is growing faster than it is possible to prepare and train pastoral leadership. We will continue to respond to the need for leadership training by providing training at multiple levels and in multiple training options.

Our goal is to strengthen the recruitment and preparation of missionaries. The missionary team will continue to be our most significant ministry resource. During the next 10 years COM will need to recruit at least 250 new missionaries to maintain a level of 150. In order to grow to 200 missionaries by the year 1995, we will need to recruit at least 300 new missionaries. An increasing percentage will need to be engaged in evangelism and church planting. Adequate preparation for increasingly complex cross-cultural ministries will be a high priority as we look toward the coming of Christ's kingdom.

Goal four: to seek unity. COM seeks to strengthen interagency cooperation where feasible. We already cooperate with other Mennonite mission agencies in 10 out of 17 countries. We will relate increasingly to overseas churches in a partnership for further cross-cultural mission outreach among unreached peoples. Finally, the Commission on Overseas Mission may partner with the Taiwan Mennonite Church to send a Taiwanese missionary to Argentina.

Seminary seeks to train proclaimers

Mennonite Biblical Seminary, in association with Goshen Biblical Seminary, has just completed a triennium during which enrollment for one year, 1983-84, was the highest in its history—244. Each year since, however, has seen a small drop. We call congregations to encourage and challenge individual people to make plans to prepare for church service. This is our task.

With new faculty appointments made and more to be in place within the next three years, Mennonite Biblical Seminary is strong academically. New appointments are these: Erick Sawatzky, director of field education; Gary Martin, instructor in evangelism and church planting; Daniel Schipani, professor of Christian education; Marcus Smucker, assistant professor of pastoral theology; Perry Yoder, associate professor of Old Testament; June Alliman Yoder, instructor in communications and preaching. Further appointments will be made in Old Testament, New Testament and preaching, as well as hiring an assistant in spiritual disciplines. We are also in the process of evaluating our counseling services and considering adding an associate dean.

A new and growing program is to place some students as interns or apprentices with pastors in churches. Along similar lines, Gayle Gerber Koontz will be coordinating a three-year faculty scholarship and research program. Also a women's graduate stipend, a gift from a friend of the seminary, makes possible yearly appointments for someone to teach and do research on the seminary campus.

The seminary's physical plant will be improved by the completion of student apartment buildings and a library addition. Enrollment for the coming year will help dictate how soon these building projects need to materialize.

The church's task is to be an agent of the building of Christ's kingdom. All agencies within the church work at that. Mennonite Biblical Seminary sees itself as very much involved in training those who will be proclaimers of the message of the kingdom of Christ.

Mennonite Biblical Seminary trains proclaimers of the message of the kingdom of Christ.

Women in Mission charts the future

At the beginning of the 1980s Women in Mission designated eight goals that would receive special attention over the decade. These goals are to foster spiritual growth among members; strengthen relationships with women abroad; assist women in developing their gifts; relate to the hurting and lonely; strengthen family and marriage relationships; unite efforts to improve television; encourage more communication among women's groups, districts and conferences; continue financial support of local-, district- and General Conference-related ministries.

Looking inward and outward. We recognize that the inward journey is necessary if the outward journey is to be effective. Through study and prayer groups, retreats and conferences, women continue to be challenged in this area.

Through personal contact, mutual visits and scholarships for church leadership training, the international network of women has been enriched. WM anticipates a flourishing of this activity in the years to come.

Women in Mission has been and will continue to be a training ground for leadership that has led to fuller participation in churches and in the conference. It will continue to speak to the various social issues, whether they be international peace, hunger, aging or missionary family needs. Family life issues, domestic violence, abuse, parenting for peace and justice, marriage enrichment and subtle influences of television are ongoing concerns.

Special effort in the past has been made by the staff and executive to be in contact with groups and districts. Efforts will continue in the area of inter-Mennonite communication as well as with the MCC Committee on Women's Concerns in order to coordinate women's work, foster cooperation and avoid duplication.

As an important arm of the General Conference, WM will continue to support the programs of the conference. It is no secret that the contemporary scene has brought changes in women's organizations in the church. Convinced that the women's organization plays an important role in service, we will continue to respond to the needs in the local and global community. (In 1985 monetary and material aid giving by General Conference women amounted to over $1.3 million.)

Women in Mission feels the challenge of enlisting the gifts of all the women in the church.

Women in Mission applauds the inclusion of women in leadership positions in the local church. Some women, however, are still not involved on those levels. One of the challenges during the rest of the decade is to enlist the gifts and speak to the needs of *all* the women in the church. This will require re-evaluation, flexibility and adaptability on the part of the organization.

Conclusion. If the proposed capital fund drive is approved by delegates at the coming triennial business sessions in Saskatoon, monies from it would be used to work at these visions for 1986-89. Delegates will also have opportunity to modify these projections for the next triennium.

The counsel of congregations should be sought and brought to Saskatoon July 21-27. What are our priorities for the next three years as we work toward the coming of Christ's kingdom? How can we best proclaim Jesus Christ? In what ways should we evangelize, teach biblical principles, develop and train leaders, and achieve Christian unity? *Muriel Thiessen Stackley, with E. Stanley Bohn, J. W. Sprunger, Erwin Rempel, Henry Poettcker and Joan Wiebe*

June 16 has been named by the World Council of Churches as a World Day of Prayer and Fasting, in remembrance of the "sacrifice, agony and travail of all who died in Soweto 10 years ago." Churches are asked to use the day as one for ecumenical intercessory prayer, fasting, education and action.

Migrant and seasonal agricultural laborers are the most abused workers in the United States, the American Civil Liberties Union said in a statement issued in cooperation with the American Friends Service Committee. The report, "The Hands That Feed Us: Undocumented Farmworkers in Florida," tells of dire health conditions in the fields, abuses by officials against Hispanic-looking people, and exploitation of imported foreign workers in virtual slave conditions.

THE MENNONITE
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The Evangelical Press Association has awarded a second place to the May 14, 1985, issue of *The Mennonite* in the category of "single-theme issue." The 24-page magazine was expanded to 64 pages in celebration of the 125th anniversary of the conference and featured a historical timeline. Copies of this anniversary issue are available for $2 from Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

NEWS

Nearly 700 gather in Goshen

Mennonites, Brethren hold Festival of Worship

Goshen, Ind. (Meetinghouse)—A much-larger-than-expected crowd of nearly 700 from all over North America descended on Goshen College May 15-18 for a Festival of Worship. Most of them were pastors, song leaders, worship leaders and worship committee members from local congregations. And many of them came together in car pools and van loads.

Leaders of the three sponsoring denominations—Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church and Church of the Brethren—said the large turnout demonstrated the increasing interest in worship in their denominations, which traditionally have scorned the practices of liturgical churches but have not given much thought to their own worship experiences.

"I hope this will help reshape our worship life—both individually and corporately," festival coordinator Harold Bauman told the expectant participants, who seemed eager to learn about as well as experience good worship. One observer soon noted, however, that while the liturgical influences on the festival were strong, the influences of charismatics and minorities were absent.

Keynote speaker Don Hustad, a veteran church music professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said too much of the worship in his own denomination—and among Mennonites and Brethren—is "shallow, simplistic, sentimental and showy." He said too much of it is also preoccupied with personal spiritual experiences as expressed through gospel songs and testimonies. Hustad urged Christians to focus their worship on God and not on themselves.

Kathy Meyer and Maribeth Shank of the Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., a dually affiliated congregation, lead in worship.

Each of the three sponsoring denominations were responsible for leading a start-of-the-day worship service during the festival. They were intended to serve as models for congregational worship, although they were admittedly high-powered and perhaps out of the reach of the average congregation.

The opening Mennonite Church-planned service, for example, used some of the top talent in the denomination—worship leader Marlene Kropf, preacher Myron Augsburger, song leader Mary Oyer, children's storyteller Jim Lapp and others. Participation by the worshipers was encouraged through prayers, litanies and responsive readings printed in an attractive folder. The 25-minute sermon was an important part of the service but not dominant as it often is in Mennonite congregations.

The General Conference-led service used the creativity of worship leaders John Rempel and Marjorie Geissinger, preacher Jake Tilitzky and song leader Marilyn Houser Hamm. Centering on the theme of reconciliation, the service included a confession by Tilitzky—a British Columbia pastor who is president of his denomination—that he had offended a member of his congregation and that "I'll need to go talk to him tomorrow when I get home."

After each *experience* of worship was a time for looking at the *theory* of worship—for theological reflection on its meaning. Colorado pastor Marilyn Miller said that worship should be an encounter with the "whole God" with "our whole selves"—mental, emotional and physical. College professor Don Blosser called for a new kind of preaching that grows out of congregational life and not out of the pastor's study. Theologian Millard Lind (substituting for ailing Earl Fike) emphasized the importance of telling and retelling the story of God and his people.

In the afternoons, festival participants had a menu of 45 workshops from which to choose. Among the offerings were worship planning, bannermaking, the church year, the role of the worship committee, incorporating

More than 6,500 scientists, including a majority of professors in the nation's top 20 university physics departments, have declared themselves opposed to President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative and have pledged not to accept any "Star Wars" research funds, SDI opponents said May 13. The scientists, including 15 Nobel laureates, have signed a "pledge of non-participation" that calls SDI "ill-conceived and dangerous." The pledge maintains that no weapons system can render nuclear missiles "impotent and obsolete," as Reagan has called for.

Justice Fellowship, a national criminal justice reform group, on April 18 called for public officials to "punish offenders without punishing ourselves" by increasing the use of restitution and community service sentences for non-violent offenders. Citing new statistics released in March by the U.S. Department of Justice, the head of Justice Fellowship said that nearly every state could significantly reduce the cost of public safety by using restitution- and community service-based punishments for those convicted of non-violent offenses.

The Manitoba Teachers Society recently requested that the provincial government education department look at introducing "peace education" in the schools. The request notes that "world peace and individual freedom are both rational premises and viable objectives for education" and that curriculum should be planned and implemented accordingly.

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children in worship, drama, song leading, liturgical dance, the use of instruments and storytelling.

A workshop on "Liturgical Renewal" led by Conrad Grebel College chaplain John Rempel highlighted the increasing interest by Mennonites and Brethren in the liturgical worship patterns of the Catholic Church and some Protestant denominations. Rempel noted that many evangelicals are looking for more structure and symbols in their worship at the same time that liturgical churches are seeking more freedom and informality. "The recipe for us today," he said, "is freedom within form."

The evenings were reserved for celebration, including an organ recital by keynote speaker Don Hustad, a slide presentation of avant-garde needlepoint work by Mennonite artist Liz Wenger and a musical production of Benjamin Britten's "Noye's Fludde" by members of College Mennonite Church—where many of the festival sessions were held.

Marilyn Houser Hamm (right), Altona, Man., begins a piano workshop by having people in the group share about their function in worship.

Most of the audience at the musical were unaware that one of the performers collapsed of a heart attack at the end of the performance. He was Lee Slough, a member of the orchestra and the father of Rebecca Slough, one of the planners of the festival. He died on the way to the hospital. The audience, who watched Slough throw himself into playing the timpani for the first time since his high school days almost 40 years earlier, was visibly disturbed when they learned of his death the next morning.

Throughout the festival, the people who are working on a new hymnal for the Mennonites and Brethren sought reaction to their efforts so far. They brought along 200 copies of a "test book," which they said could be expanded and refined into the new hymnal—set for release in 1992—if the response was positive. They distributed questionnaires to the participants.

The festival concluded with a Brethren-style love feast. It included a light meal, communion and "handwashing" (instead of the usual footwashing, due to logistical problems in the cramped space available). "We leave as new people—transformed by our worship," said Brethren leader Bob Bowman at the end. *Steve Shenk*

West Coast Mennonite Writers' Workshop

Oct. 17-19, 1986

- Keynote speaker: Katie Funk Wiebe
- 35 workshops to choose from
- Storytelling
- Poetry reading

For further details contact:

Western Mennonite School
9045 Wallace Road, NW
Salem, OR 97304

Telephone: (503) 363-2000

By next fall business students in Mennonite colleges will have access to a computer-aided job placement service. Called Network, the new data bank service will match students' skills and interests with employment opportunities in business and overseas development. The project is a joint venture of the Council of Mennonite Colleges and Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

Over 200 people gathered in Warrensburg, Mo., April 3-5 to discuss the Christian call to resistance of the arms race. Warrensburg was described as "the most vulnerable spot in the world" because of the 150 missile silos nearby. On April 5, 76 people entered the Whiteman Air Force Base as a symbol of their resistance to nuclear weapons. Another 60 supported them. Karolyn Zerger of Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan., participated in the civil disobedience. Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder, one of the speakers, addressed the subject of Scriptures and resistance.

Elsie Troyer of Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan., and John Howard Yoder (center) walk to Whiteman Air Force Base during the Faith and Resistance retreat at Warrensburg, Mo.

CIM considers Anabaptist theology in mission

Winnipeg (Meetinghouse)—Applying Anabaptist theology in world missions seemed to be the theme of the Council of International Ministries meetings April 28-30 at Mennonite Brethren Bible College here.

The most difficult issue was working toward a joint statement on the South African situation that was consistent with Anabaptist theology. As an Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission statement reflected, "From the safety of our sanctuaries of privilege and comparative security as North Americans we are poorly placed/qualified to empathize adequately" with South Africans. Those agencies working in areas near South Africa were left with the task of formulating a position paper. MCC, AIMM and the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions will work on a draft to be presented at the next CIM meetings in December.

The Latin America committee, meanwhile, worked at defining the role of Anabaptist theology in relation to other theologies, such as Roman Catholicism and the charismatic movement. Herman Bontrager of MCC reported that "in the Roman Catholic and evangelical churches significant numbers are . . . recognizing in the Anabaptist theology and ecclesiology a biblical position they want to focus on." Referring to the surprising strength of the peace position in the Mennonite churches in Latin America, he said, "We have been more successful than we thought in giving the whole gospel."

Anabaptist theology was also brought to bear on another painful topic—missionary breakdown. Jim Bertsche, executive secretary of AIMM, said, "This is the price to be paid for taking the stance we adopt, being prepared to suffer with those who suffer."

The need for Anabaptist theological education in Third World churches was reported. Foundational courses are provided by the Theological Education by Extension program in Africa and by a similar program called SEMILLA in Latin America. SEMILLA has grown considerably in the last year under the able leadership of LaVerne Rutschman. However, the churches in Africa in particular are requesting more advanced training. If an Anabaptist seminary is too expensive and impractical, they would like to have Anabaptist chairs at already established colleges in Africa. CIM affirmed this request and seeks further direction from the African churches. The production of an introductory Anabaptist textbook for Africa is also being considered.

CIM is a twice-yearly consultation of administrators of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission agencies and of development agencies such as MCC and MEDA. Associated with it are four area committees, Africa and Latin America meeting in the spring and Europe and Asia scheduled to meet at the fall meetings in December.

Formally organized in 1976, CIM took some time at these meetings to regularize its operations. One large

Half a million martyrs

"Today's Christians are going through the same baptism by fire that Mennonites went through at earlier stages of their history." These are words Southern Baptist missions researcher David B. Barrett used to explain some startling figures in his "Annual Statistical Table of Global Mission." Barrett's figures, published in the January issue of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, suggest that there are far more Christian martyrs in the 20th century than at any other time since the birth of the church. Barrett's figures list the annual number of Christian martyrs as 35,600 in 1900. By 1970 the number had risen to 230,000 and by 1980 to 270,000. For 1986 he projects 330,000, and he expects the number to reach 500,000 annually by the year 2000.

Erwin Rempel, board chairman of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, told the CIM meeting in Winnipeg that he had written to Barrett requesting documentation for his figures.

Barrett replied that the figures were based on information he was still collecting and processing. He added, "Anyone who finds these figures incredible is probably not in touch with the actual situation." Citing events in the last 10 years in Vietnam, the Ukraine, Lebanon, Honduras, Cambodia, Zimbabwe, Guatemala, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Lithuania, Romania, Poland and the Philippines, he wrote, "Detailed reports from these countries concerning the murders of Christians would probably also be called 'incredible' by people unfamiliar with the realities of church life there."

Barrett plans to publish his assembled data in his "Global Evangelization Movement: The A.D. 2000 Series." He is requesting churches to send him the name, office or occupation, country and place of death and year of death of all martyrs from their denominations "from the crucifixion to 1986." *Jim Coggins*

The Save South Moresby Caravan, a unique co-venture between the Haida Indian people and environmentalists, recently crossed Canada by train in a bid to raise public awareness of their struggle to limit unrestrained logging on the Queen Charlotte Islands. Included in the tour was a stop in Winnipeg, where several Haida elders and young people spoke with students at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. The Haida, who have never officially given up title to the Queen Charlottes, want the British Columbia government to designate certain areas of the chain as natural preserves.

The Martin Marietta plowshares, Mennonites Mary Sprunger-Froese and Al Zook and Catholic Marie Nord, were sentenced May 1 to 60 days probation and 60 days of imprisonment at the Jefferson County jail in Golden, Colo. The three had served 35-37 days in jail before the trial, leaving less than a month to serve. A maximum of eight years imprisonment could have been imposed. Judge Henry Nieto said, "The court wants to protect your right to speak out, but your action should be within the system."

A dozen religiously affiliated schools were among the more than 230 colleges and universities conducting research with government military contracts in 1984, according to a survey by the American Friends Service Committee. Among the church-related universities receiving military research grants were Notre Dame (Catholic) and Brigham Young (Mormon).

Missionary casualties

The problem of missionary casualties was a topic of concern at the CIM meetings. These casualties most often occur "in situations of long-term endemic conflict and long-term deprivation," where there is "persistent tension, conflict and suffering."

MCC Canada Peace and Social Concerns coordinators Peter and Leona Penner described some MCC workers who "broke down" under pressure and had to return to North America "against their wishes." Leona asked, "Are we embarrassed by their failure, pain and anger?"

Administrators from other mission agencies admitted that "we also had a worker break down in an emergency situation" and wondered how to care for troubled workers.

Several mentioned that it is up to the mission agency to detect and send troubled workers home because they often cannot recognize their own situation. This, however, often compounds the problem, since the returned workers feel guilty knowing that they are returning to safety while those they worked with cannot leave.

Some returned workers complain that "churches in North America are unprepared to deal with missionary casualties," Leona said. The missionaries are blamed for "taking things too seriously." Paul Gingrich, president of Mennonite Board of Missions, added, "Some church people misinterpret their suffering as simply seeking sympathy."

Wilbert Shenk of MBM noted that the mission agencies also come under attack for sending people into such situations, "but we can't avoid sore spots."

Ironically, the MCC workers who broke down were "the best kind of people," according to Nancy Heisey of MCC, the kind of people who go out and identify with and befriend those they are working with—"and they couldn't handle it, for four years watching their friends starve and be killed. People say they should have done stress management. They did stress management and they still broke down."

Jim Bertsche, executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, said, "This is the price to be paid for taking the stance we adopt, being prepared to suffer with those who suffer."

Heisey added, "We talk in our churches about the meaning of this, what brokenness really means. Our churches are often at a loss to understand how what we think theologically is worked out in practice." *Jim Coggins*

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agenda item was identifying issues that further consultations should deal with. Suggestions ranged from the education of future missionaries to mission/indigenous church relations, MCC/mission relationships and guidelines for missionaries in war zones.

The council also agreed to a formula for compensation when one agency lends personnel to another. In keeping with this spirit, it was decided to compensate Mennonite Board of Missions for one-fifth of Wilbert Shenk's salary. Shenk was elected to serve another three-year term as secretary-treasurer of CIM. Although he thus becomes CIM's first paid staff person, with a 1986 budget of only $48,500, CIM remains a consultative and cooperative agency." *Jim Coggins*

Bethel College drops two programs, international development saved by fund drive

North Newton, Kan.—A reorganization of programs and personnel at Bethel College that will produce 6 percent savings in the annual operating budget over the next two years was announced April 10 by president Harold J. Schultz and academic dean Brian Schrag.

The $403,000 in estimated savings will be used to concentrate resources to strengthen the 28 majors and other programs of the college.

The consolidation plan will eliminate offerings in secretarial studies and French. Reorganization of program occurred in sociology, political science, piano and industrial arts. Cross country was eliminated as a varsity sport.

The international development program was to be eliminated, but a drive led by Duane Friesen, a faculty member in Bible and religion, raised $20,660 in two weeks. With the foregone severance pay this was enough for the program to continue for two more years. There is a commitment to continue beyond that time, given a sufficient level of enrollment.

The reorganization will eliminate 11 positions—six in staff/administration and the equivalent of five faculty positions by the end of the school year.

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Hundreds of superior dairy cattle will be saved from slaughter by sending them to needy farmers in Third World countries, thanks to the efforts of Heifer Project International. HPI plans to place 1,000 heifers in developing countries overseas, provided funds can be raised for transportation and related costs. These cattle would otherwise be slaughtered under the federally sponsored Dairy Termination Program. For more information contact Heifer Project International, Box 808, Little Rock, AR 72203, (501) 376-6836.

Ron Sider and Walter Klaassen have been confirmed as featured speakers for Sunday services on July 6 at the Kitchener (Ont.) Memorial Auditorium. The services will climax celebrations of the Mennonite Bicentennial, the 200th anniversary of the first arrival of Mennonites in Canada. The morning service will also feature the premiere performance of "Parables of the Kingdom," a choral work by Len Enns of Waterloo, Ont., that was commissioned by the Bicentennial Commission.

Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond, B.C., has decided to offer billeting for youth groups planning a trip to British Columbia this summer. After numerous calls to the church from groups planning to visit Expo '86, the church council decided to hire a summer youth worker to coordinate this ministry. Groups need to bring their own sleeping bags, towels and pillows. The church has full shower facilities and a gym. Groups will be free to make their breakfasts in the church. Cost per night is $5. For more information contact Peace Mennonite Church, 11571 Daniels Road, Richmond, BC V6X 1M7, (604) 278-0111.

Pennsylvania church expands Hispanic ministry

Lansdale, Pa. (GCMC)—"We are one congregation," say Raphael Peralta and Norman J. Schmidt. That's why the word "department" is used for Hispanic ministries within Grace Mennonite Church here.

"By the year 2000," adds Peralta, "it is expected that there will be 42 million Spanish-speaking people in North America. We must plan for Spanish congregations." Peralta and Schmidt are demonstrating that this can be done well by a Hispanic group being part of an established church.

Peralta is the fourth Hispanic pastor in the 18 years of Grace Church having a Spanish department. His method is to visit families in the community, "call them together—as they one by one accept the Lord Jesus—and tell them about being one in the body of Christ."

"It is my idea," continues Peralta, "for the young people at Grace to receive instruction with the English congregation. They want to speak English. For older people language is a barrier, and it is also important to value the Spanish language."

Peralta and Schmidt conduct bilingual communion services four times a year. Sunday school, vacation Bible school and family dinners are also held together. The combined choir is billed as "super." Worship services, however, are separate and at the same time. At Grace the Hispanic congregation now numbers about 40, the English-speaking congregation about 250.

Structurally many committees at Grace Church involve members of both the English and Hispanic congregations. Peralta and one of his deacons join Schmidt and five others to form the spiritual council. There is one church council for both groups.

Peralta is also working to establish Spanish departments in Quakertown, Allentown and Philadelphia. Sometimes, like at Second Mennonite Church in Philadelphia, integration happens readily. (Estimates are that 160,000 Hispanics live in the area of this congregation.)

"It is not my idea to start new churches," says Peralta. "I go to the missions committee of a church and present a Hispanic candidate as a potential leader. Then I work with families, gradually bringing them together. A group needs at least two years to be nurtured, to develop a conscience about responsibility, to learn to give to God's work."

Schmidt adds, "I consider it an honor that Raphael and I visit Hispanic families together. When the people see unity in us, they welcome me."

Currently four seminars are held each year to which all Spanish leaders are invited. Highly qualified Mennonite teachers are brought in as instructors.

In the negotiating stages is a place of instruction in Pennsylvania for Hispanic leaders, offering biblical studies, Anabaptist theology and English as a second language. The two groups discussing this are the Eastern District Conference (of which Grace Church is a member) and the Franconia Conference. At this time specialized training is available at Goshen (Ind.) College.

"We're looking ahead," says Earl Stover of the Eastern District missions committee. "Hispanic leaders are emerging. We need leaders first and then buildings." *Muriel T. Stackley*

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Box 347
Newton, KS 67114

Mobile Mennonites (Canada)
600 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4

Is it easier to travel by wheelchair from Alaska to Washington than to enter most Mennonite churches? Michael King asked that question when he visited 12 Lancaster County (Pa.) churches in late February to find how accessible those churches were for the handicapped. King traveled over 5,000 miles by wheelchair in the summer of 1985 to raise awareness for the handicapped. In a survey of 25 churches in the area, 13 had a ramp or were on street level so that handicapped people could enter. Eight had handicapped parking. Only two had accessible restrooms.

Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conferences will be encouraged to "consider a more balanced involvement of men and women" when appointing representatives to MCC Canada membership meetings, according to a resolution approved during MCC Canada executive committee meetings held in Winnipeg March 14-15. Although women represent well over half of MCC volunteers and nearly half of overseas leadership staff, only a tiny percentage of North American administrators and board members are women.

Television fails to offer an environment for a child's first six years needed to develop intelligence, creativity and other basic skills, asserts John Rosemond of Knight-Ridder News Service. "I think it would be ideal if children were not exposed to any television—even *Sesame Street*—until they were successfully literate. This would mean keeping most children away from TV until age 8 or 9," he wrote.

Oklahoma church packs history and launches new chapter

Inola, Okla.(GCMC)—Not just once but twice in its 72-year life has Eden Mennonite Church had its meetingplace burned down. "They burned it for spite," says octogenarian John Funk.

The year was 1918. Funk, then a teen-ager, "noticed the light of the fire from the east porch of our house. Later somebody let it out of the bag that a man had been paid $25 to set fire to the church."

The little congregation then began meeting in George J. Voth's barn, but it also burned down. "They didn't like it that we spoke German," says Funk.

Now, almost 70 years later, the congregation of about 160 has dedicated its new sanctuary. The May 18 celebration included the baptism of six young people.

The new 80' x 90' wheelchair-accessible structure has been attached to the educational wing, which in 1964 was added to the original building, constructed in 1920 and expanded in 1950. "What's *inside* the building," Earl F. Cater reminded the congregation, "is the most important part."

Another speaker estimated "tens of thousands within a 15-mile radius" of Eden Church who need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ in this urbanized section of eastern Oklahoma.

A visitor at the Eden Church celebration

Pastor needed

Deer Creek Mennonite Church seeks the services of a pastor beginning **Aug. 1**.

Contact:
Carl Hohmann
Deer Creek, OK 74636
(405) 267-3288.

Pastor needed

Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, a congregation of 500 members, is seeking a full-time pastor leader. The position is vacant effective Aug. 1, but the starting date is negotiable.

Applicants should be theologically qualified, experienced, willing to work in a team ministry and able to communicate with members in both English and German.

Send application to or request information package from:
Chairman, Pastoral Search Committee
926 Garfield St.
Winnipeg, MB R3E 2N6.

Mennonite Collegiate Institute is now accepting applications for the 1986-87 school year in the following positions:

- business administrator
- residence life coordinators (one couple or two singles)
- physics and mathematics
- physical education (boys' and girls').

Please send resume to:
Allan Dueck, principal
MCI
Box 250
Gretna, MB R0G 0V0
(204) 327-5891.

Pastor needed

Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a pastor commencing in September or as soon as possible thereafter.

Both male and female candidates will be considered. This could also be a shared position.

For further information or to apply contact:
Allan J. Klassen
Chairman, Search Committee
909 East Centre
Saskatoon, SK S7J 2Z9
(306) 373-2260.

Evening programs announced for Saskatoon '86

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Evenings will be full to running over during the General Conference Mennonite triennial sessions, July 21-27, in Saskatoon. The presidential address, reception of 22 new congregations, and music by alumni of Canadian Mennonite Bible College are the features for Monday evening. "Great Trek" is the track for combined reporting by minority representatives and young adults on Tuesday, the speakers being Byron Becker, Ruth Buxman, Ruth Hunsberger, Ivorie Lowe and Ted Risingsun. This will be preceded by drama from Conrad Grebel College. Youth night is Wednesday night with Hubert Brown speaking on "Kingdom People." In addition, Victoria Dyck will direct a one-act play. Myron Augsburger and Ron Sider are keynote speakers on Thursday and Saturday, respectively. The subject for Friday evening is "The Canadian Mennonite Experience," chaired by Larry Kehler. A "peace revival" is being planned for each evening following the scheduled sessions. Registrations may be sent to GC Triennial Sessions, Box 431, Sub-Post Office #6, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W0.

Evangelists and church planters have been requested of Mennonites by missionaries in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Paraguay. In Uruguay, John Fehr is engaged in evangelism and church planting, described by personnel recruiters as a most demanding job. Currently 28 General Conference missionaries from Canada and the United States are at work in Latin America.

Pontius Puddle, the cartoon strip by Joel Kauffman, appeared in 57 magazines throughout North America last year (including *The Mennonite*) with a combined readership of nearly 32 million. The denominations putting up with Pontius included Episcopalians, Calvinists, United Methodists, Catholics, Quakers, Presbyterians, Lutherans, the Salvation Army and, of course, Mennonites. Beginning this year, Pontius will make an appearance in some of the 40 religious publications that cover Australia and New Zealand.

Mennonite congregation welcomes Ethiopian refugees

Saskatoon (GCMC)—Refugee Group #9 at Nutana Park Mennonite Church here has welcomed Aschalew Walelign, 27, and Abebe Kelkile Mekuria, 24, to the community. The 31 members of the group have made themselves fully financially responsible to the two Ethiopian men for one year.

"We learned about Aschalew and Abebe," says Edmund Pries, pastor at the church, "through their friend who had been able to come to Canada earlier. We had been in contact with them through Canadian Immigration for just over a year before their arrival in Saskatoon."

Group #9 rented a two-bedroom apartment suite for the men and assisted in finding work and further education as well as inviting them to be active in the Nutana Park congregation.

The two Ethiopians got into trouble with their government when, as members of the air force, they criticized the bombing of Eritrea. Forced to flee, disguised as nomads, they were misled by their guides and ended up in Somalia.

Somalian officials, surprisingly, heeded their request to be turned over to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. (The two men then disguised themselves as students but eventually told UNHCR their background.)

Then came Jan. 28, 1985. "While I sat for the interview of the Canadian Immigration," recalls Walelign, "some refugees (who were dissatisfied with the work of UNHCR) applied force to take confidential documents from the officer. One of the documents was mine. I was arrested and imprisoned for three months. I faced many problems in prison, but I had a confidence that God would get me out."

On April 13 the two men were expelled from Somalia and driven directly from the prison to the airport and thence to Canada, "where we were longing to go since we left our country," adds Walelign.

Other Saskatchewan Mennonite congregations at Laird and Tiefengrund are also sponsoring Ethiopian refugees. "Over the last few years," says Pries, "we have sponsored refugees from Vietnam, Laos and (recently) El Salvador." And he adds, "My parents were refugees during and after World War I."

Admissions counselor for Bluffton College. Duties include recruitment travel to high schools and college fairs, interviewing, correspondence and follow up with prospective students. B.A., preferably from liberal arts college, required; excellent communication, organizational and interpersonal skills; willingness to travel. Salary dependent on qualifications and experience.

Submit resumes **by June 16** to:
Fred Amstutz
Director of Admissions
Bluffton College
Box 638
Bluffton, OH 45817.

Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Service, Inc. (MHRS) is seeking a director to begin duties as soon as possible. Responsibilities include all operations and programs, personnel management, financial and long-range planning, publicity, fund raising and public relations. Salary negotiable.

MHRS is a non-profit construction company, serving the needs of the elderly and low-income people. Applications from women and minorities are encouraged.

Send resume to:
MHRS
2038 N. Broadway
Wichita, KS 67214.

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Assistant pastor needed

First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a full-time assistant pastor, commencing Sept. 1. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry and assisting with pulpit duties. Ability to give leadership in church music would be an asset.

For information or application contact:
Archie Epp, congregational chairman
1513 Argyle Ave.
Saskatoon, SK S7H 2W3
(306) 374-1516.

Employment opportunities

Swift Current Bible Institute invites applications for the following positions:

Houseparents. Responsibilities: relate to young adults, providing counsel and spiritual direction in a residential setting. Other tasks, depending upon interest, could include teaching or directing the sports program.

Voluntary service cooks (two positions available). Responsibilities: planning, preparing and serving of meals under the direction of the head cook.

The above positions begin **Sept. 1.**

Direct your applications and inquiries to:
Personnel Committee
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., hosted the Second National Conference on Faith and Learning April 17-19. More than 200 Christian college representatives attended the conference. Speakers included Warren Bryan Martin of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Talbert O. Shaw of Morgan State University, John W. deGruchy of the University of Cape Town, Arthur F. Holmes of Wheaton College, John Howard Yoder of Notre Dame University, Stanley Hauerwas of Duke University Divinity School, Senator Mark Hatfield, Robert Kreider of Bethel College and Elise Boulding of Dartmouth College.

On March 24 Israeli forces shelled Nabatiye, Lebanon, the town where Mennonite Central Committee country representatives Bob and Jill Burkholder live. Three people were killed and 24 were wounded. The schools were closed for 10 days as a result of the attack. The MCC program continues much as planned, but work in Tibnine, an agricultural village where MCC has worked since 1978, has been difficult because of recent Israeli incursions. "Many friends in the Tibnine area experienced damage and humiliation," say the Burkholders.

Domestic violence, in particular spouse abuse, is a subject increasingly in the news. Last fall Mennonite Central Committee established a Task Force on Domestic Violence, which is compiling a list of people with personal experience and expertise, particularly Mennonites. Responses should be sent to Melita Rempel, 11-575 Ridout St. N., London, ON N6A 2R2, (519) 434-8209.

RECORD

MINISTERS

Ardean Goertzen, pastor at First Church, Oak Park, Ill., has resigned effective June 30. On June 1 he began exploration of leadership issues and concerns within Mennonite Church and General Conference churches.

Jessie Kehler will be ordained as a chaplain June 22 at Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, Man.

WORKERS

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has announced the following appointments: *Robin Crews*, Boulder, Colo., has been named director of the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution and assistant professor of peace studies. He will begin on Aug. 1. Crews holds a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Berkeley, and a doctorate from the University of Colorado, Boulder. *Arthur DeHoogh*, president of Freeman (S.D.) Junior College since 1979, has been chosen as director of admissions beginning July 1. He earned a bachelor's degree from Central College in Pella, Iowa, and a doctorate in student personnel administration from the University of Northern Colorado.

DeHoogh

Guete

Marco Guete, a church planter in Chicago, has been appointed secretary for Hispanic ministries by the Commission on Home Ministries.

James D. Kratz was installed as Mennonite Mutual Aid's fourth president on May 9 in Goshen, Ind.

Vineland Memorial to mark bicentennial

Vineland, Ont.—Ginny and Gary Dyck, (St. Catharines, Ont.) and Marty Savanick, (Scottdale, Pa.) inspect the Vineland Memorial (below).

The memorial is being assembled on the grounds of First Mennonite Church in Vineland, site of the first Mennonite meetinghouse in Canada. Artist Barbara Faust was commissioned by the Mennonite Bicentennial Commission to design and erect the memorial, which will celebrate the 200 years since the arrival of Mennonites in Canada.

The 15-foot monument will be symbolic of Mennonite life in Canada. Stones used in the base were collected from Mennonite communities in Canada from coast to coast. Some of the stones are engraved with names of the localities they originated from.

In an attempt to link the past with the present, Faust included in her design items such as Conestoga wagon wheels and original plowshares with modern wooden plaques. The carvings will include inscriptions and symbols of Mennonite history and faith, such as the flame and sword of persecution, the dove of peace, the Bible and the tree of life.

The monument will be unveiled on July 1.

Nominees for General Conference elections

The General Conference nominating committee has selected nominees for the ballot at the triennial sessions July 21-27 at Saskatoon. Delegates may make further nominations at the conference. Information comparable to that printed below with signatures of both nominator and nominee must be submitted in writing to the conference secretary by 11 a.m. on Wednesday, July 23. This information will be made available to delegates several hours in advance of the voting at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, July 24. (Fraction votes will be rejected. Votes cast must be in whole numbers.)

Each term is for six years, except for the officers, who serve for three years. An asterisk indicates an incumbent.

The nominating committee consists of Mary Boyer, Pandora, Ohio; Marjorie Geissinger, Zionsville, Pa.; Willis Harder, Moundridge, Kan.; Eileen Kehler, Bluffton, Ohio; J. K. Klassen, Winkler, Man.; Anna Rehan, Rosthern, Sask.; and Myron Schrag, Minneapolis.

President

Kenneth Bauman, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., 1973-; missionary service in India, 1954-72; member, General Board, 1973-86; trustee, Bluffton (Ohio) College, 1974-83; member, GC/MC Human Sexuality Committee, 1980-85; member, Theological Education Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1984-. Vision: "That the General Conference, empowered with the Holy Spirit, will share the love of Jesus Christ through word and deed, that lives will be transformed and new churches established. That, in tune with biblical truth, it will discern and obey God's will as it applies Christian faith and practice to issues relating to personal and social ethics."

James Gingerich, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Moundridge, 1971-; member, PDC peace and service committee, 1960-64; member, WDC peace and social concerns committee, 1967-73; WDC president, 1973-76; member, WDC ministerial committee, 1973-83, 1985-; member, WDC executive, 1980-83; GC vice president and General Board member, 1980-86; member, GC Committee on the Ministry, 1975, 1977-83; member, GC program committee, 1980-86. Vision: "To experience unity and spiritual and numerical growth through a commitment to listening, giving, Bible study and prayer. To facilitate witness, service, mission and education programs that we cannot do separately."

Vice president

Florence Driedger, executive director, Family Service Bureau; member, Peace Mennonite Church, Regina, Sask.; executive member, Mennonite Central Committee, 1981-; vice chairperson, MCC Peace Section, 1983-; Native Ministries staff, 1980-82. Vision: "My prayer is that all people may know Christ, that all may experience peace and that members of the General Conference, through sharing our love, may be used by God to achieve these goals."

Ruth Naylor, associate pastor, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio; former English teacher; frequent contributor to denominational magazines; member, CDC program committee, 1969-71; member, GC program committee, 1971-83, co-moderator of Dialogue on Biblical Interpretation in Wisconsin, 1985. Vision: "It is my prayer that we may be aware of and responsive to God's leading among us so that the kingdom may be more fully realized here on earth."

Secretary

Myron Schultz, dryland grain farmer, Bloomfield, Mont.; member, Bethlehem Mennonite Church; former church board chairman; member, NDC nominating committee; NDC statistician; current director of Region III MDS and fifth member on the national MDS executive committee. Vision: "When I see the many ways God has blessed the various efforts the General Conference has and is putting forth to carry out Christ's great commission, I am excited that I am a member of such a conference and I look forward to continuing this partnership for Christ's honor and glory."

Another nominee for secretary is yet to be selected.

General Board

Elect three

**Richard Early*, pastor, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.; member, EDC ministerial committee; missionary to Uruguay, 1975-76. Vision: "My vision for the General Conference is a firm biblical commitment to mobilizing and training our members to expand the boundaries of mission outreach. This means a greater cooperation and a willingness to risk all for Christ's sake."

E. LaVerne Epp, attorney and municipal judge, Newton, Kan.; member, Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.; congregational moderator and chairman of BC church board, 1980-84. Vision: "To develop the conference into a greater resource center from which local churches and district conferences can draw necessary and vital information to continue

K. Bauman

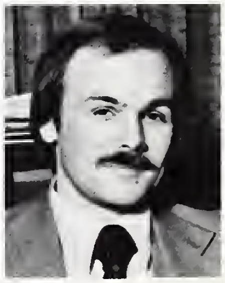
Gingerich

Driedger

Naylor

Schultz

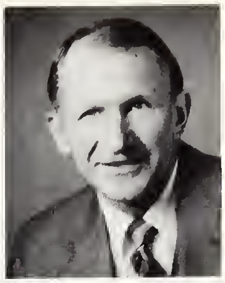
Early



E. L. Epp

Glanzer

Juhnke


Reimer

Becker

Dick

to meet the needs of local congregations and mission projects in a changing world."

Aaron Glanzer, farmer; member, Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.; NDC financial secretary, 1975-79; president, NDC, 1984-. Vision: "That we may have a better understanding and relationship with each other and build God's kingdom among us and throughout the world."

**Anna Juhnke*, English professor, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; member, Bethel College Mennonite Church; chairperson, GC communications committee; chairperson, MCC U.S. and member of MCC. Vision: "That the General Conference unite in a new commitment to Christ, study of the Bible and outreach and service in God's kingdom."

Richard D. Reimer, professor of economics, College of Wooster, Ohio; member, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio; vice president, CDC, 1978-80. Vision: "The General Conference must find ways to minister more effectively to its own membership and the larger community in order to meet not only spiritual but emotional and material needs."

Winona Rempel, student, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg; lay minister, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg; writer of "Life Begins at Fifty" in *Mennonite Reporter.* Vision: "The future of our earth looks dark, but the people of God, knowing his sovereignty, continue to dream and have visions. The board, representing the people, must try to bring those visions to fruition."

The continuing member of the General Board is Loretta Fast, Toronto. In addition each commission appoints two members, the seminary board one member and the General Board up to three members.

Education

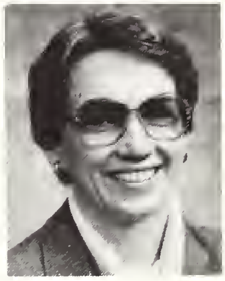
Elect five

**Kathy Bauman*, director/teacher at a day-care center; member, Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.; member, EDC education and publication committee, 1982-. Vision: "I would like to help more people make use of the many resources and resource people that are available to help them grow into a deeper commitment to Christ."

W. Rempel

Kathy Bauman

M. Kliewer


Ortman

Ardys Becker, member, Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C.; former preschool, public and Sunday school teacher; Sunday school curriculum editor in Taiwan; former consultant and area representative for Foundation Series; co-author of *Creative Family Worship* and *Your Church and Small Groups*. Vision: "My desire is that our families, small groups, churches and institutions will have dynamic resources that will lead us and our seeking friends to clear commitments to Christ and lives of earnest discipleship."

Roy Dick, professor of biology and science education, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford; member, Bethel Mennonite Church, Hydro, Okla.; member, WDC program committee and executive council; chairperson, Committee of Concern—a western Oklahoma project partially supported by GC and MCC. Vision: "To provide media that are interesting and therefore produce Christian growth that manifests itself in biblical knowledge and application in our daily lives. Educational materials should be flexible enough that they can be used with participants and by leaders of diverse levels of training."

Marilyn Peters Kliewer, instructor of New Testament at Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute; member, Jubilee Mennonite Church, Swift Current; member, congregational steering committee; member, board of worship and music. Vision: "Education, a vital part of our conference programs, occurs at many levels. COE has the responsibility to provide resources and leadership to assist us in becoming effective, responsible Christians in today's world."

Janelle Ortman, homemaker; member, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.; NDC education committee, 1981-; Foundation Series resource person, 1981-. Vision: "COE has a challenge to facilitate growth and understanding within the community of believers through the institutions of home, church and school."

**Lois Thieszen Preheim*, member, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.; task force on future models of Christian education in the congregation; NDC Foundation Series resource person, 1979; University of Nebraska-Lincoln supervisor of student teachers. Vision: "Congregational concerns of faith, order, worship and education shape individuals. COE's availability as a resource in these areas could strengthen congregational life."

**Elaine Rich*, writer and teacher; member, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio; adviser to international students at Bluffton College; served in Japan, 1966-79; columnist for *Mennonite Weekly Review*; author, *Mennonite Women.* Vision: "I would like to see the General Conference continue its proclamation of Jesus Christ through quality education and publication, but also through missions, evangelism, community development and other ministries."

Dale R. Schrag, director of libraries, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; member, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.; member, WDC historical committee, 1982-. Vision: "The Mennonite church must have a thorough understanding of its past as

Preheim

Rich

Block

Boschman

J. R. Friesen

H. Kliewer

Schrag

Toews

V. Ediger

Falk

Peters

Yost

it faces the future. The Commission on Education of the conference should play a key role in ensuring that Mennonites understand and appreciate their unique history."

**William Toews*, farmer; member, Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, chairperson, church council; teacher, United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington, 1965-79; principal, UMEI, 1967-78; chairperson, United Mennonite Conference of Ontario personnel committee. Vision: "My hope for the General Conference is that we realize to a greater degree the opportunities that we have to be of service to other people and the potential that exists among us to address those opportunities."

Continuing members of the Commission on Education include Louise Friesen, Saskatoon; Michelle Friesen-Carper, Pasadena, Texas; Irene Klassen, Calgary; Irvin Richert, Quakertown, Pa.; Erick Sawatzky, Elkhart, Ind., and Ben Sprunger, Worthington, Ohio. Three additional members are selected by NDC, PDC and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Overseas Mission

Elect four

**William Block*, director, Committee on Ministerial Leadership, Conference of Mennonites in Canada; member, Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; chaplain, Woodstock School, Mussoorie, India, 1976-79; moderator, Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, 1984-85. Vision: "The rapidly growing cities of the Third World are where so many of the hopeless, needy and lost find themselves. The Commission on Overseas Mission needs to move into these cities more consciously and purposefully."

Maryanne Boschman, secretary/homemaker; member, West Abbotsford (B.C.) Mennonite Church; vice president, Canadian Women in Mission, 1976-79; involved in Victim Offender Reconciliation Program; coordinator, Refugee Resettlement Centre, 1978-81; member/secretary, Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, 1984-. Vision: "My hope is that the Commission on Overseas Mission will not only assist existing churches but send missionaries to the 'hidden peoples' of the world."

Viola Ediger, homemaker; member, Grace Mennonite Church, Regina; member, Saskatchewan Mission Committee, 1982-86; COM missionary in Japan, 1953-1983; member, CMC program committee, 1983-; MCC worker in Paraguay, 1947-49. Vision: "My hope for the Commission on Overseas Mission is to continue creatively the partnership with the younger churches abroad and to be sensitive to opportunities, challenges and needs as God calls us into new areas."

**Anne Falk*, nurse interpreter for the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Edmonton; member, First Mennonite Church, Edmonton; MCC nurse in Vietnam, 1966-69, and in Indonesia, 1972-78. Vision: " 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel' is still the Commission on Overseas Mission's primary mandate and ringing challenge. We who have received that gospel dare not grow weary or lose heart in passing on Christ's message of hope."

**John R. Friesen*, pastor, St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite church; former member, CMC Congregational Resources Board. Vision: "Missions is vital to Christ's mandate for his church. We are called to continue to communicate the gospel in an ever increasingly difficult world situation."

Henry Kliewer, pastor, Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 1981-; COM missionary in Japan, 1976-80; member, British Columbia camp committee, 1984-87. Vision: "I would like to see the General Conference be true as a body to our head, Jesus Christ, trying to follow and proclaim him in all areas of our life."

Virgil Peters, physician, Mount Angel, Ore.; member/deacon, Calvary Mennonite Church, Aurora, Ore.; COM medical missionary in Taiwan, 1964-67; member, PDC home missions committee. Vision: "I believe in the Great Commission and that it should be a priority for the General Conference to take the gospel to the rest of the world."

Burton G. Yost, professor of Bible, Bluffton (Ohio) College; member, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton; COM short-term missionary in Taiwan—1975-76, in India—winter 1981, in Korea—August 1983-January 1984. Vision: "Missions, a necessary and vital part of the Christian life and our Mennonite heritage, should combine and balance building on the past with innovation for the future and the gospel elements of personal commitment to Christ, church planting, humane service and a just society."

Continuing members of the Commission on Overseas Mission include

Kathleen Driedger, Winnipeg; Anita Froese, Altona, Man.; Jessie Gaeddert, Denver; Mary Kay Gerig, Elkhart, Ind.; James Juhnke, North Newton, Kan.; Alice Ruth Ramseyer, Elkhart, Ind.; Charles Sprunger, Harleysville, Pa.; Larry Tschetter, Freeman, S.D., and Jeanne Zook, Portland, Ore. One additional member is selected by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Home Ministries

Elect three

David Kam-tak Chiu, pastor, Saskatoon Chinese Mennonite Church; coordinator, Asian Mennonite Outreach Services; member, joint GC/MC Confession of Faith committee; worked with the CDC in the area of refugee resettlement ministries and church planting. Vision: "That Anabaptism would be introduced to more of the cross-cultural groups through missions and evangelism, and that true integration of these multicultural churches into the conference would become a reality."

Robert O. Epp, farmer; member, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.; short-term MCC service, 1945-46; member, NDC peace and social concerns committee, 1980-, chairperson, 1983-; member, Witness for Peace delegation to Nicaragua, March 1984; member, NDC executive committee, 1983-. Vision: "Commission on Home Ministries binding and extending the Christian fellowship to all races and ethnic backgrounds in the Anabaptist model, being an advocate for the disenfranchised of our society."

**Marian Claassen Franz*, executive director, National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund; chairperson, CHM U.S.; former curriculum writer; former member, COE board. Vision: "With spiritual vitality and a peace/evangelism balance, keep wineskins flexible enough for new calls. Like the New Testament church, embody a rich diversity of cultures which ministers to congregations, governments and the poor."

**Ivorie G. Lowe*, homemaker/mother; dean of students at Bloom High School; chairperson, Southwest Community Service board (formerly Markham Workshop, started by Community Mennonite Church); member, board of elders and worship committee, Community Mennonite Church. Vision: "That we can move toward experiencing the abundant life of true people of God when we widen our Mennonite faith in reaching out in servanthood and love to invite people of other heritage to share our faith as equals."

Mary Anne Moser, librarian; member, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio; member, sanctuary committee for Central American refugees; member/chairperson, board of mission, peace and service, 1982-85. Vision: "To listen and respond to the needs of our General Conference congregations as we work together in carrying out the tasks of evangelism, peace and service."

**Leonard Wiebe*, pastor, Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.; member, WDC home mission committee, 1975-81. Vision: "My hope for the General Conference is that we will continue to give emphasis to planting new churches that are committed to the Christian Anabaptist faith."

Continuing members on the Commission on Home Ministries include Floyd Bartel, Newton, Kan.; Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Manhattan, Kan.; Warren Habegger, Berne, Ind.; Milton Harder, Geneva, Neb.; Homer Janzen, Rosthern, Sask.; Lynn Liechty, Berne, Ind.; Malcolm Wenger, Newton, Kan., and Mark Winslow, Allentown, Pa. Three additional members are selected by PDC, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Women in Mission.

CHM U.S.

Elect one

**Pearl Janzen*, semiretired volunteer; member, First Mennonite Church, Reedley, Calif.; director, MCC West Coast SELFHELP and material aid, 1977-79; Mennonite Voluntary Service with the Hopi Church in Arizona, 1979-85. Vision: "For me the vision of the church is to walk side by side, believers from a rich diversity of backgrounds, experiences, coming together to be the body of Christ."

Weldon D. Nisly, pastor, Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship (dual conference); farmer and peace ministry, Iowa, 1982-84; MCC VS and peace section, Philadelphia, 1977-82; CHM staff, Poverty Ministries, Newton, Kan., 1973-75; Iowa political and legislative employee, 1970-73. Vision: "For the General Conference to be compassionate, witnessing, biblical people experiencing growth and renewal by the power of the Holy Spirit, with prayerful visionary leadership."

The continuing member is Willis Busenitz, Busby, Mont.

Seminary

Elect five

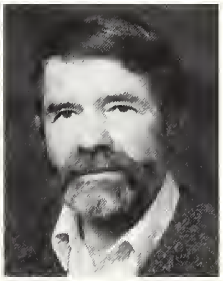
Claude Boyer, pastor, Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio; member, COE, 1981-83; member, CHM, 1985-. Vision: "My hope would be that I would be able to bring a pastor's perspective into the planning for seminary education, especially as it relates to the pastoral and preaching ministry."

Ruth Buxman, pastor, First Mennonite Church, San Francisco; part-time nurse at the University of California at San Francisco; MCC nurse in Haiti, 1970-72. Vision: "Mennonite Biblical Seminary has an important role in its training of church leaders. We need leaders who are sensitive to people and needs, leaders who are both pastoral and prophetic. May MBS provide such an environment."

**Marjorie Ediger*, home health aide; member, Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church; member, WDC home mission committee, 1973-79. Vision: "I am concerned that Mennonite Biblical

Chiu

R. Epp



Moser

Wiebe

Franz

Lowe

Janzen

Nisly

Seminary continue to adequately prepare women and men for Christian leadership in our churches, our mission fields and wherever God calls."

**Darrell Fast*, pastor, Toronto (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, 1970-86 (becoming pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., in August). Vision: "The seminary needs to strengthen its links with our congregations in developing quality pastoral leaders, even as it serves our institutions in training people for teaching, mission and service ministries around the world."

John M. Miller, seminary professor, 1978-; pastor, Fellowship of the New Creation, Tulsa, Okla. (WD/SCC); missionary in Mexico, evangelism, church planting, leadership development, 1966-72, 1976-78. Vision: "I seek the recovery of New Testament dynamics in Mennonite churches through the heritage that makes full discipleship to Jesus Christ central. Rightly oriented theological education is crucial to leadership ministry for a church that reaches the world."

Edmund Pries, pastor, Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon; member, Canadian Mennonite Bible College board; member, CMC Congregational Resources Board, 1980-82. Vision: "That our seminary may continue to build on their solid base of serious biblical and theological study and practical ministry training while continuing to expand cross-cultural awareness and addressing global issues from an Anabaptist Christian perspective."

Dick Rempel, pastor, Eden Mennonite Church, Chilliwack, B.C.; chairman, Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia. Vision: "To produce biblically faithful, maturing servants of Christ, whose spirit enables love for God, his Word and people shapes their lives into a transforming force in the church and in our mission to the world."

Melvin Schmidt, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio; member, planning committee for Pastor's Seminar at AMBS. Vision: "Pastoral education for the 1990s and beyond must prepare our pastoral candidates for the churches wherever they will be found, whether it be rural or urban."

**Myron Schrag*, pastor, Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, 1976-; vice president, NDC, 1978-82; chaplain (COM assignment), Woodstock School, Mussoorie, India, 1973-76. Vision: "That the seminary will continue to train women and men for ministry in the local congregation and a variety of other settings, combining sound scholarship with servant leadership."

**Donovan E. Smucker*, professor emeritus and special lecturer, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.; member, Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.; professor, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 1947-57; visiting professor, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, 1981-82; Board of Education, 1950-56; GC vice president, 1977-80. Vision: "My vision is perfectly expressed by the purpose of *The Mennonite*—'. . . to witness, teach and build the fellowship within the context of love and freedom.' "

Continuing members of the board of Mennonite Biblical Seminary include Phyllis Baumgartner, Berne, Ind.; Menno Epp, Leamington, Ont.; Dorothea Janzen, Hillsboro, Kan.; Waldemar Janzen, Winnipeg, and Fred Liechty, Berne, Ind.

Administration

Elect three

Barbara Clinckscales, lawyer, J. Randall Clinckscales firm, Hays, Kan.; member, Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka, Kan.; member, WDC board of trustees.

Daniel Flickinger, computer research, Hewlett-Packard Co.; member, First Mennonite Church, San Francisco. Vision: "We face new challenges in the conference as the number of Mennonites in urban settings and in new professions grows. May we draw on the strength of our tradition in meeting these challenges."

Walter Loewen, self-employed businessman; member, First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, deacon, 1980-; member, Mennonite Foundation of Canada board, 1978-83, treasurer, 1978-82; member, Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba business administration committee, 1980-83. Vision: "That spiritual renewal be emphasized in our congregations as the major influence to strengthen family units, that they in turn be enabled to reach out to others."

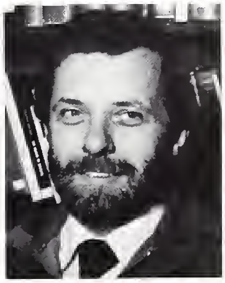
**Edgar Rempel*, treasurer, Conference of Mennonites in Canada; member/finance chairperson, Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; experience in self-employed business and financial institution administration. Vision: "To challenge congregations and General Conference members to a greater commitment to give of themselves and their resources for the purpose of ministering to those without faith."

Marlene Suter, administrative assistant, Brementowne Manor Apartments for the elderly; member/treasurer, Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill.; financial assistant, Mennonite Day Care Center. Vision: "I would like to see continued emphasis by the General Conference on urban ministries, providing support to those living in urban areas and increased cooperation between the Mennonite Church and General Conference."

Elmer Wall, pastor, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.; NDC

Ediger

Fast



D. Rempel

Schmidt

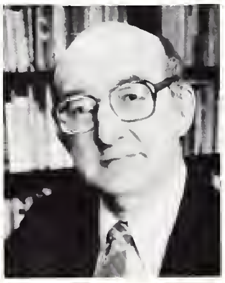
Boyer

Buxman

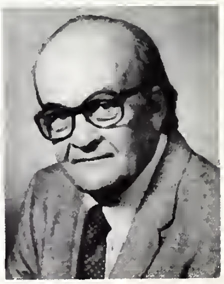
Miller

Pries

Schrag



Smucker



Flickinger

W. Loewen

E. Rempel

Suter

Wall

Auernheimer

vice president. Vision: "To seek to use God's money as effectively as possible and to guide, in practice of stewardship, those who are wealthy as well as those who are suffering in the farm crisis."

Continuing members of the Division of Administration include Paul I. Dyck, Bluffton, Ohio; Gladys C. Graber, Buhler, Kan., and Richard A. Rosenberger, Quakertown, Pa. Three additional members are appointed by the General Board.

Schowalter board

Elect one

Clayton Auernheimer, real estate sales and investments; member, First Mennonite Church, Reedley, Calif., congregational chairman, board of deacons; representative, Mennonite Aid Plan; member, Kings View Hospital board of directors, 1961-72; executive director, Camp Keola. Vision: "The Showalter Foundation is a special gift to the Mennonite church. New and innovative programs can be started and some existing programs be augmented with the available funds. The foundation funds must be managed wisely."

Howard Baumgartner, attorney; member, First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.; board member, Church Extension Services, Inc., 1970-79; member, board of trustees, Bluffton (Ohio) College; member, CDC executive committee. Vision: "My goal is the responsible management of Schowalter funds and the creative use of these funds to build Christ's kingdom as understood by the General Conference."

The continuing GC representative on the Schowalter Foundation board of trustees is J. W. Fretz, North Newton, Kan. Other trustees are selected by the Mennonite Church and the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite.

Women in Mission

U.S. vice president

Ruth Ramseyer is a member of the Oak Grove Mennonite Church in Smithville, Ohio. Ruth, a former home economics teacher, is a homemaker who enjoys trying new recipes, knitting, reading and traveling. In her church she participates in choir, song leading, serving on the worship commission and coordinating visitation. In her WM group she has served in various capacities. She is on the Camp Friedenswald Women's Retreat committee.

Another candidate will be selected later.

Secretary

Marlene Faul serves as administrative assistant at the Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan., where she is a member. She is active in her local WM, presently serving on the program committee, is a representative to the stewardship commission and plays in the bell choir.

Helen Friesen, Mountain Lake, Minn., is a piano and organ teacher and a member of Bethel Mennonite Church. Local church involvements include serving as church organist, choir director, church council member and Sunday school superintendent. She has served as WM president and adviser of Northern District and on the NDC program committee.

Program committee

Elect two

Loretta Baumgartner, therapist, Community Outreach Program of Mid-Missouri Mental Health Services, Sedalia, Mo.; member/Sunday school teacher, Bethel Mennonite Church, Fortuna, Mo. Vision: "I love the General Conference because it has been so functional for me in keeping me close to Jesus and in challenging me to deal with my talents in the world. I want the General Conference to go on promoting faith among its people and in the world, and let's not close our eyes to human suffering. We can live out a message of hope."

Adelaide Fransen, homemaker; part-time student; member/choir director, Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church; chairperson, United Mennonite Conference of Ontario education committee. Vision: "GC sessions are a time for fellowship, inspiration, worship, reflecting on what has been achieved and seeking God's will in a changing world. It is the task of the program committee to plan for a setting where this can best be achieved."

Eleanor Loewen, education consultant; member, Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; education consultant, Congregational Resources Board, 1981-86; member, Elim Bible Institute board; director of student services, COE, 1976-79; voluntary service, Camp Friedenswald, Mich.

Joyce M. Shutt, pastor, Fairfield (Pa.) Mennonite Church; MCC VS, 1959-61; Women in Mission literature committee, 1972-80; CHM as WM representative, 1973-80; GC ministerial committee, 1973-75. Vision: "That we dare to become a truly radical church with a radical evangelism that takes Christ seriously; that our evangelism does justice, loves mercy and walks humbly with our God."

Continuing members of the program committee include Neil Matties, Winnipeg; Gloria Miller, Hartford, S.D., and Erland Waltner, Elkhart, Ind.

H. Baumgartner

Fransen

E. Loewen

Shutt

A return to apartment 21

Mary Burkholder

Journeys can be full of surprises. Who would have predicted the journey of a timid but determined payroll clerk/bookkeeper from the Hillsboro Cooperative Creamery in Kansas to the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Indiana as cashier-receptionist (1958-62), then almost three decades later as a widow returning to AMBS from Hamilton, Ont., to study spiritual discipline? Certainly not Estelle Bartel Enns herself, though as she now reflects on her past she sees concrete evidence that God has truly been at work in the path her life has taken.

A chance remark to housemate Tina Block (Ediger) in the early '50s that sometimes she would enjoy working at the seminary eventually led to a job offer from Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1958. But Estelle, who characterizes herself as generally fearful of changes, declined. Later, when the offer was repeated, Estelle accepted. She explains, "It just became clear that this was the right thing to do, so I came. I remember saying to my boss that the seminary would be a good place for me to grow."

Those early Elkhart days of 1958 and on were exciting. The new facility wasn't yet completed, and the seminary drive was only a muddy track. But the sense of mutual caring was strong, and Estelle, as cashier-receptionist, had contact with everyone, including student Herman Enns, who stopped by her office frequently.

After their marriage in September 1961, Estelle and Herman moved into apartment 21, and for one year, until Herman's graduation in 1962, Estelle was the wage earner. The switch in roles was unusual in those days. She still has to chuckle as she recalls the look on Herman's face when she handed him his first weekly allowance.

The next block of her life centered in Hamilton, Ont., where Herman served first as pastor, then as hospital chaplain until his sudden and untimely death from a heart attack in June 1977. During those 15 years, Estelle's role was largely supportive, although she did have opportunities to be creative. Remembering voluntary service involvement in mental hospitals in Kansas, for example, inspired her to suggest a VS unit in Hamilton.

Looking back on her married years, Estelle senses that not having children meant that she invested much emotional energy in her relationship with her husband. And since one of the highlights of their partnership had been devotions over breakfast, she found she needed to explore new ways of carrying on the inner journey after the loss of her husband.

"I was determined to grow and somehow learn something through my loss experience," says Estelle. So she began attending workshops and retreats on inner healing and prayer, such as the Daily Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and participated in the formation of a small, church-related group of mutual support.

She subsequently learned of the Spiritual Growth program at AMBS and felt led to return to get an understanding of the Anabaptist perspective on spiritual formation.

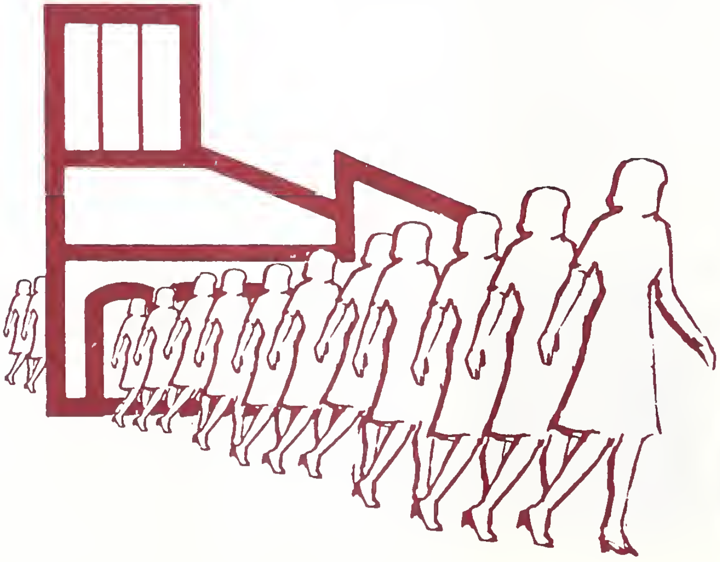
"It makes my spiritual journey more credible if fellow Mennonite pilgrims are with me," she explains. Her sense of aloneness in her search to know God came to a pleasant resolution as she attended the classes in "Spiritual Life Disciplines" taught by Marcus Smucker, the journaling group led by Thelma Groff, the early morning prayer centering experiences and three one-day retreats.

Through all of these Estelle has been encouraged by the spiritual autobiographies of others and inspired to notice how God works in a unique way in each life. She says, "I believe this is a journey we are all called to participate in. As Augustine says, 'Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in God.' Or as Henri Nouwen puts it, 'The goal of our life is not people. It is God.' "

As for future goals and vision? Estelle's dream is to develop a ministry in spiritual formation among older adults in the Hamilton, Ont., Mennonite community. The ministry would include modeling some of the spiritual disciplines, using resource people such as Thelma and Marcus for retreats.

Estelle concludes, "Moving back into our former AMBS apartment last fall has provided a setting for growth and enrichment. I am grateful to God for the opportunity to live in apartment 21 both as a newly married and again this year as a widow who is finding the journey toward God a stretching experience."

Estelle Enns (above) came back to seminary after almost three decades. She came to study in the spiritual growth program.



Mary Burkholder, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, is an M.Div. middler at AMBS. Mary writes Estelle's story from their conversations.

Our journey in kingdom living

Jan and *Rick Janzen*

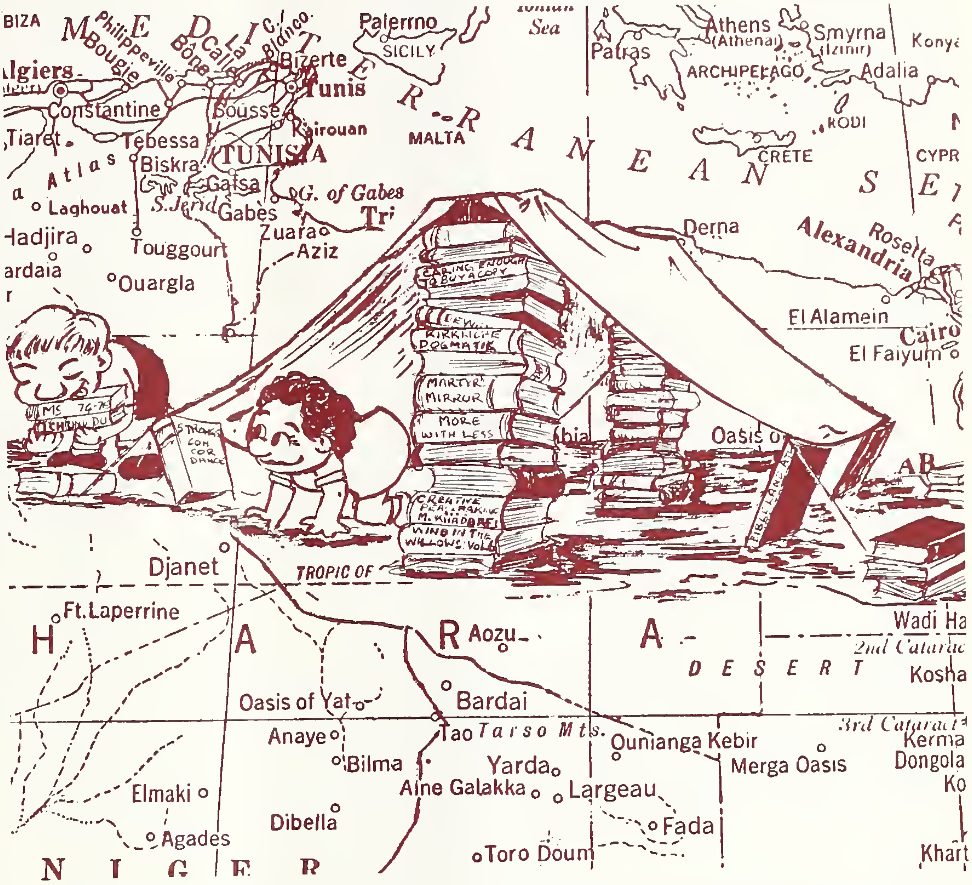
Our lives took a dramatic turn a few years ago as Mennonite Central Committee volunteers working in Africa. The change for us was not particularly philosophical or theological in nature, since we had for some time been convinced of the Christian and humanitarian reasons for service to fellow human beings. The geographical and physical changes, on the other hand, were large.

The real change occurred in our encounter with a way of life different from the one we knew. A new world was opened to us. We experienced life with vitality in a new sense. Where greeting friends was a higher priority than getting to work on time, where animals of all domesticated varieties shared the streets with motorists and pedestrians, where the local "fast food" outlet was a woman frying spicy bean-cakes over an open fire in the shadow of an air-conditioned office building, and where Christian faith, in a predominantly and sometimes oppressive Muslim environment, had to be strong or die.

Political difficulties ended our term unexpectedly and we returned home on short notice. More convinced than ever of the truth and importance of the Christian witness of love, justice and hope for all people, we arrived at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa., with no plans for the future. Before starting our assignment we had considered the possibility of attending seminary upon our return home. So when the suggestion was made that we study at Mennonite Biblical Seminary for a year and then continue our service, we were delighted.

We found at MBS an environment that encouraged us to integrate our life experiences with academic discipline. Rigorous Bible study, deep concern for ethical decision making and an appreciation for where we as a people come from historically have meshed in many ways with our personal context of faith and service.

A welcome part of the MBS experience has been the communitarian aspect of learning. We have found many people like ourselves, somewhat rootless—at least geographically—who have learned many languages, eaten many foods and shared their faith in many different ways. Recently, in a small group discussion, about 20 students told of their experiences with "culture shock." Beneath the humor in many of these personal reflections we found joy in the sense that together we are participating in a plan so large that our personal trials and inconveniences are almost insignificant.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Our planned one year at MBS has stretched into two, and we are now in the process of finalizing arrangements for our next MCC assignment. This means we will be moving again and will require more adjustments, particularly for our children, Christopher (14) and Stephanie (12). Our resolve to continue to serve and the confidence that we have chosen the right path for our lives has grown stronger. This is largely due to the support we have felt here and elsewhere. Our home congregation, the Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Church, and other groups, individuals and institutions have supported us at many times and in many ways. It is the partnership we feel with the larger Mennonite constituency, both in MCC service and as MBS students, that provides the vision and strength for our feeble attempts at "kingdom living."

Janet and Rick Janzen, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, served with MCC in West Africa prior to two years of study at MBS. Janet graduated in May with an MA in theological studies, Rick with an MA in peace studies.

Let's not be silent

I am troubled by the letters to the editor regarding the issue of homosexuality. It is a terribly difficult issue for our diverse church to be addressing.

A disproportionate number of letters express repugnance for gay people and an unwillingness to accept gay people into the fellowship of believers. Where, I wonder, are the letters of those of us who feel otherwise? One could suspect that the editorial staff of *The Mennonite* is manipulating the "Letters" column to convey their own convictions as that of the larger constituency.

I wonder if those of us who welcome all believers, gay or heterosexual, into our fellowship aren't timid or fearful of what fellow parishioners may think of our acceptance of those traditionally rejected. Our words are needed for the thousands of gay Mennonites who read Mennonite periodicals and repeatedly feel rejected by their brothers and sisters.

What about those of you who have gay children? Please do not remain silent. Those of you who have friends, siblings or other loved ones who are gay, speak up. Your voice, your words are conspicuously absent. This is a matter of people whom we love and are being hurt and disenfranchised on an ongoing basis. The silence of those of us with gay children or gay parents or gay loved ones accentuates the pain and widens the chasms.

I confess to my own long-lived silence. I register my commitment to helping the General Conference become an inclusive church rather than an alienating church. And I long to hear the voices similarly moved and likewise convicted. *Lynn D. Keenan, 2416 Emerson St., Denver, CO 80205*

May 6

On inerrancy of the Bible

I respond to the article "Conversations on Faith III Tackles 'Inerrancy' Question" (April 8 issue).

For those not identifying with the "inerrancy" of the Holy Bible, the only other position is to be for an "errant" Bible, a body of Scripture less than trustworthy. If the Bible should be errant, at least in parts, who should determine what parts are not trustworthy? I would hardly give that task to the like of seminary teacher Dorothy Jean Weaver, after seeing how she interprets Isaiah 11:12 as teaching that the earth is square (therefore the Bible is errant). The context makes it crystal clear that the passage has nothing to say about the shape of the earth but is a call for the restoration of the banished and dispersed of Israel and Judah to come back from the "four quarters of the earth" (NIV) or literally from the four directions of the compass. It seems ironic that people who gather to talk about biblical interpretation should violate such a fundamental principle as to first look at the context.

Only after you have an errant and untrustworthy Bible can you say, as Ron Guengerich did, that the creation account in Genesis is but "spiritual symbolism." Anytime you can spiritualize a passage you can about say what you wish it to mean. Once the cornerstone of "inerrancy" is removed you can make any and every article of our faith the fair game of intellectual rationalism. *Edward J. Tschetter, HCR 1, Box 59, Doland, SD 57436*

May 6

There are consequences

In response to the AIDS dilemma (Duffy, April 22 issue), I do not count AIDS as the "wrath of God" as he says some do, but whenever we break the laws of health there is a consequence—whether it is cigarette smoking, obesity, alcoholism or sex perversion. In all of these situations innocent children frequently suffer. This is not the wrath of God. It is people breaking the laws of health and the teachings of the Bible. *Ward W. Shelly, 1110 Westminster Drive, Washington, IL 61571*

May 6

GB statement inadequate

I read the General Board's sexuality resolution for Saskatoon '86 with great sadness and regret—sadness because the statement does not reflect the teachings of Christ, regret because I now realize the statement does represent the views of many members of the church.

The Affirmation and Confession sections seem to bear no relationship at all with the Covenant section. The Confession section speaks of a need for compassion, a need for repentance of judgmental attitudes. I see no sign of that in the Covenant.

The resolution represents, contrary to its wording, an unwillingness to "remaining in loving dialogue with each other in the body of Christ."

I feel the church has rejected me. I feel that the church has said, through this resolution and in countless other ways, that it rejects me and the value of my years of service.

I promise to covenant with any individual or congregation in the ongoing search for discernment and for openness, but I have decided that the only place from which to do that is outside the church. It is tragic that so many members of the body of Christ—much more talented than I—choose the same path. *Mark S. Lawson, 802 Page St., San Francisco, CA 94117*

May 6

Editor's note: Once again this topic is generating responses too long to print in full. The full version of such letters are available upon request.

Omission cited

My review of *The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism* (May 13 issue) was guilty of a glaring omission. It is that the book is volume IV of the series *Classics of the Radical Reformation*, prepared by the Institute of Mennonite Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., under the editorship of C. J. Dyck. The omission is especially embarrassing to me since I benefitted from the series by being editor of volume III and co-editor of volume II of the same series. Special apologies are due to the editor of the series. I deeply regret my oversight. *Walter Klaassen, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.*

May 8

Family life position

The General Conference Mennonite Church Commission on Education is accepting applications for a qualified person/couple to work in the areas of

- family life education
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- parenting concerns
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MEditATION

The call and care of a pastor

As part of the seminary community year after year, I see students being called, affirmed or rejected by a congregation. I have witnessed the joy and the pain of their experiences just as I have witnessed joy and pain in my own congregation's selection and care of a pastor. Following are reflections I have shared with my congregation during our own recent pastoral search.

A pastor cannot be all things to all people. Nor would I want him or her to try. Nor can we as individuals relate in the same manner to all pastors. We need to appreciate that perfection is not a human trait to be found in anyone, especially since defining "the perfect pastor" lies in the mind of the definer. How quickly our definitions change! Can we not learn to value and utilize the talents/gifts our pastor may have and then supplement any lack we find with our own abilities from the congregation? Until that is learned, congregations will continue to be known as nit-picking and pain-giving rather than nurturing and affirming.

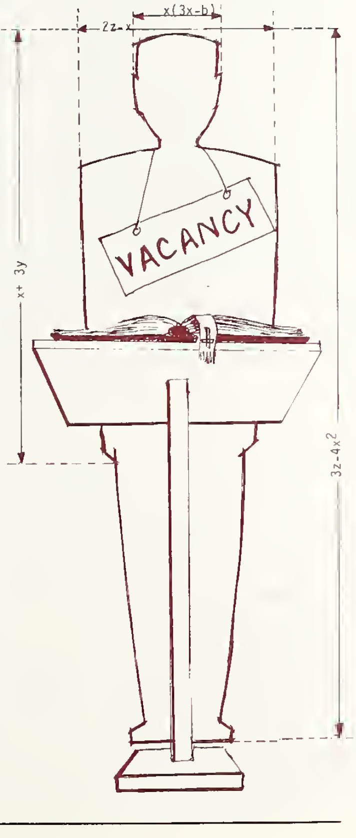
I feel strongly that as a General Conference Mennonite congregation we need to have a pastor who has beliefs comparable to the GC statement of faith. Else why belong to the General Conference Mennonite Church? The pastor should be involved with and supportive of our conference.

I would see as pastor someone open to the Spirit, not dogmatic in views. One who can speak from conviction in love, not judging nor demanding the same exact stance from others. The time has come for Mennonites to include many types, races, stances, convictions, all working together in love, not condemning what we do not understand, nor expecting the same light to be given to all on each belief.

On training/educational qualifications, I tried hard not to let my almost 19 years of employment by the seminary influence my answer. If people have training, they may not need many years of experience. A satisfactory internship speaks well for the candidate. A person should not be rejected because of the lack of a seminary degree, especially one with a history of longtime satisfactory service. Too often the request is almost a comedy of errors—"a young energetic person with 30 years' experience and an impressive degree or training record."

The time has come for our congregations to begin to live more by the Golden Rule: to treat the pastors as we would have our pastors treat us.

Mary Troyer



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This special Mennonite Biblical Seminary issue helps us widen our horizons. There is much to be learned from other cultures. People from another culture can tell us things about ourselves that we have never noticed.

In this issue we also project the future of the General Conference Mennonite Church. We give you the slate of nominations for Saskatoon '86 and urge you to prayerfully consider them. Cast your votes carefully or help your delegates as they prepare for the elections.

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David Augsburger is professor of pastoral care at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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editorial

Our preachers and the Shekinah

Some people call me an "old style" preacher. To some this is positive, to others negative. My style of preaching is often identified with "pulpit pounding, loud, emotional, direct." Some say it is less scholarly, less logical and less sophisticated than our age and our churches deserve.

Recently, in a sermon, I heard a preacher draw attention to *his* style a couple of times. When he wanted to make a point, he said, "If I were a certain type of preacher, I'd now hit the pulpit." Another time he said, "Some preachers would raise their voice at this point."

What is preaching? Why is it designated in the Bible apart from teaching? How do we become "proclaimers" of God's Word?

The word "Shekinah" is not in the Bible. But it is in the Bible dictionaries. Shekinah comes out of the Hebrew language and is used quite a lot in the Targums and rabbinic writings. Shekinah is the word used to express the sacred presence of God, or as the Bible repeatedly calls it, "the glory of God."

The Shekinah was recognized in the guiding Exodus cloud (Exodus 13:21-22) and in the ark of the covenant (Numbers 10:35-36). Upon reaching the promised land, the Shekinah was centralized in the temple at Jerusalem.

The Shekinah, however, is a "tabernacling presence." It moves to wherever God's people assemble.

Especially Paul, in his writings, suggests that the Shekinah's presence is a measure of effective preaching (1 Corinthians 2:4 and 4:20). To this point I call your attention.

When you worship, the Shekinah should be expected. Worship means to know your worth as you come with joy into God's sacred presence. It is an unmistakable and enveloping meeting with God. Certainly the speaking will be intelligent. Paul suggests one additional element—power. How often do you know this power in your worship? Preachers, how often do you know it in your preaching?

We today have much preaching without power and consequently much worship without power. We have been seduced to thinking that teasing the mind (often creatively) and the emotions (often not done well) is adequate. But we miss the Shekinah.

To know the Shekinah needs both preachers and listeners. Over the past 28 years I have preached, on average, twice a week—in all kinds of settings. I look for the Shekinah when I preach. I know most times when it is there. And there have been times when I felt the Shekinah absent.

Charles Spurgeon wrote, "I am distinctly conscious of a power working upon me when I am speaking in the Name of the Lord, infinitely transcending any personal power of fluency. . . . I am quite certain it is not of the same order or class as the enthusiasm of the politician or the glow of the orator" (*The Presbyterian Record*, April 1986, p. 23).

Such power comes to us preachers only when we are willing to face the evil powers in the world and in us (both John the Baptist and Jesus came forth preaching after retreat encounters). The Shekinah appears as we "decrease" (John 3:30), i.e. we bring our disciplines to God in humble, vulnerable service. It does not excuse us from study and logic; it gives focus and meaning to our gifts.

Such power comes to the listeners only when they too are prepared. Jesus confessed he could do no mighty work at a place because of unbelief (Mark 6:5-6). (It is interesting to note he then "went about . . . teaching.")

I recall, only too well, preaching a series of evangelistic meetings. Within me I knew the Shekinah strongly. But I did not see it in all the meetings. The reason became clear to me after I heard two members on the campaign board. One said, "I was totally unprepared when you asked me to counsel one of the seekers." Another said, "When I heard you were a GC, I expected no souls to be saved."

When worship in your church seems without the Shekinah, it's time to look in the mirror. Preachers, it behooves us as leaders to take the first look. No brilliance or experience can substitute for power. Church family, it you want growth for yourselves and you want to reach out, prepare for the Shekinah. When the Shekinah is in your worship, most people will know they have been in the presence of God. It will make a difference. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:12 JUNE 24, 1986

4 WEEKS TO SASKATOON '86

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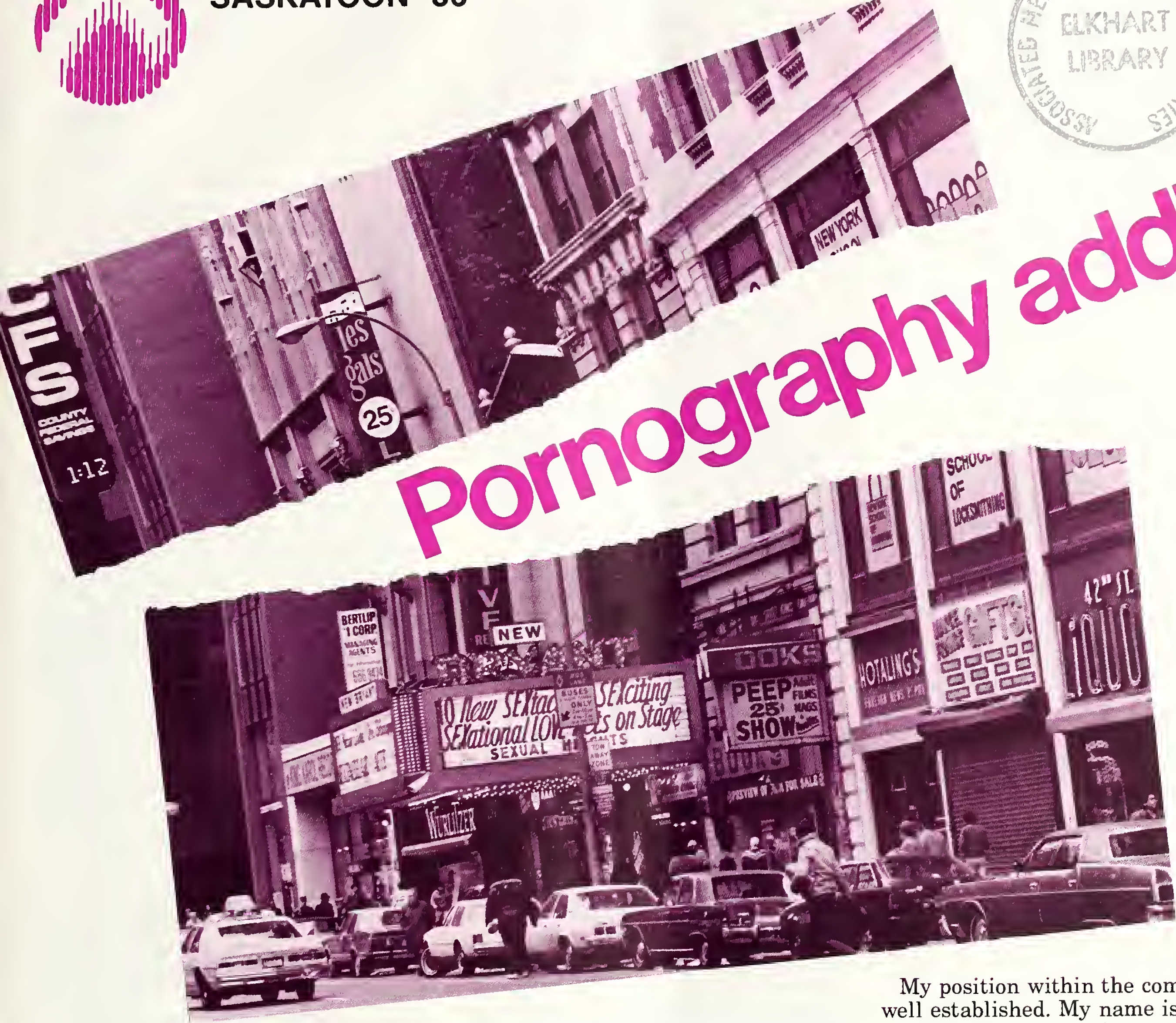
Pornography addict



Peter W. Morris

I am an addict (in reformation). I have never popped pills, smoked a joint or been high on cocaine, heroin or any of the other socially popular substances. Rarely have I indulged in an excess of hard liquor and, without too much effort, I gave up cigarettes years ago.

I have never been busted by the authorities for possession of anything illegal, nor have I ever seen the inside of a jail. Skid rows and other abodes of the addicted are foreign territory to me. In fact, it would shock my friends to find out that they quite regularly associate themselves with an addict.

My position within the community is well established. My name is familiar to many throughout the area since it appears in print on a regular basis. I am seen at many social gatherings, attend elaborate parties and am welcomed in prestigious company.

But I've had a problem with which I am only now coming to grips. When I'd leave the parties, when I'd say good-bye to my friends and business associates, I would pursue my own private world, my own private hell—my addiction.

When the lights were low, the atmosphere quiet, I'd park my car in the shadows, where it would not be recog-

I . . . was hooked on a habit as deadly as any yet devised by the author of sin, a legal practice upheld by the court systems.

nized, and enter one of the local "adult" bookstores. I followed the darkness, avoided the glances of those who might recognize me, and entered into a personal den of iniquity.

My locale changed at other times, and I might be observed sneaking into an X-rated movie house or drive-in theater. Often I'd simply drive to a nearby convenience store, where my addiction could easily be fed.

My addiction cost me hundreds of dollars per year; it has for the last 25 years—ever since I was 10 years old and sneaked my first look at a neighbor's copy of *Playboy* magazine.

In the years that followed, my need increased. *Playboy*, risqué then, became kid's stuff. Even the infamous *Hustler* magazine I eventually found unable to fully satisfy my lusts.

My addiction knew few bounds.

My marriage suffered, as I could not disassociate myself from my fantasy world. I have never known a normal, healthy sex life with my wife. My desires were claimed, rerouted by the products of a sick society at an early age.

My addiction? Pornography. It was the "monkey on my back." And for pornaholics like myself the smut peddlers are always close at hand to provide a quick fix or "just one more."

Surprised? Never thought of "dirty pictures" as addictive? Think again. As was pointed out to me recently, "To say that a bad book never hurt anyone is to say that a good book never helped anyone."

I, like millions of others, was hooked on a habit as deadly as any yet devised by the author of sin, a legal practice upheld by the court systems.

Yes, pornography is addictive. I know. In a scream for help, I decided to tell the world, "I am an addict!" Or, prayerfully, I should say, a "reforming" addict.

While my days and nights of hard addiction have lessened, thanks to a new and vibrant walk with Christ and through the care and concern of brothers and sisters within the church, I, like the reformed alcoholic who is only a drink away from his addiction, am only an image away from mine.

And that is the problem, for pornography is seemingly everywhere. Once found exclusively in adult bookstores and movies, it is now available at drug and grocery stores, in gift shops (in the form of adult toys and games) and, via cable television, hardcore erotica is increasingly available as in-home entertainment.

Struggling with the pornography problem for most of my life, it was not until I found help through a support group at our church—Hickory (N.C.) Mennonite—that I first was made aware of the pervasive effect of the problem upon my life, later finding the path of spiritual regeneration through which the problem could be treated.

Using the text *The Sensation of Being Somebody* by Maurice E. Wagner (Zondervan), Mark Landis, pastor of the church, started weekly care and share groups, involving many couples within our church community.

In often gut-wrenching sessions, we surfaced topics that had been buried since childhood. Topics, including anger and fear, suicidal tendencies, addictions, plus more recent problems such as infidelity, divorce and remarriage, were discussed with regularity.

Roots of these problems, and many more, were dug up and laid bare. Tears were commonplace as the pains of lifelong repressions were brought to the light and, through prayers and love, renewal achieved. Christian commitment, previously hindered by sins of almost unbearable weight, was set free to grow through a new appreciation of God's healing powers and a sense of self-worth.

And in times of temptation, outstretched arms were there to affirm worth and confirm Christ's love. The results of such gatherings and commitments brought our entire congregation to a new awareness of life and dedication to both Christ and each other. Into our church, through these prayer-and-share groups, was brought a vibrancy never before known.

Surprisingly, a new commitment to the community surrounding our church has come about as a direct result of our own renewal experiences through the Christ-centered walk. Whereas we once had been content to minister most directly to our congregation's needs, we now share a concern for our community, city and regions beyond as part of our extended Christian ministry.

Issues confronting both our faith and our community, be they the concerns for prayers in our public schools, the abortion issue or family violence, to mention a few, are now regularly brought before our membership as topics for fervent prayer.

Even the move to clean up our society, ridding it of the plague of pornography, an issue once foreign to many, is now attracting involvement.

"There is nothing that happened in Sodom and Gomorrah that is not happening in our country today," emphasized Robert Showers, assistant U.S. district attorney, in speaking to a group of concerned Christians locally on the pornography issue.

Showers, along with William Kelly, a 24-year veteran of the FBI, and Paul C. McCommon, legal counsel for the Arizona-based Citizens for Decency Through Law, all advocated the involvement of Christians in the anti-obscenity movement.

Speaking to our group of Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists and Mennonites, these professionals brought the shocking statistics relative to pornography before many who knew relatively little about the issue and its effects on our society.

"Many of the 50,000 American children who disappear each year are believed to have been abducted for use in pornographic movies and for use as sexual slaves," explained McCommon, adding that most of these children are never heard from again.

McCommon also cited the studies that show an "overwhelming" link between the spread of pornography and the increase in rape and other crimes against women and children.

Citing the trend away from normal sexual depictions, the group explained that magazines available nationwide in convenience stores, well within the reach and sight of children, regularly carry graphic features on group sex, homosexual encounters and bondage.

What is sold beyond the doors of adult establishments? Books and films commonly showing "scenes of bestiality, defecation, sadomasochism and defilement of religion," according to Kelly.

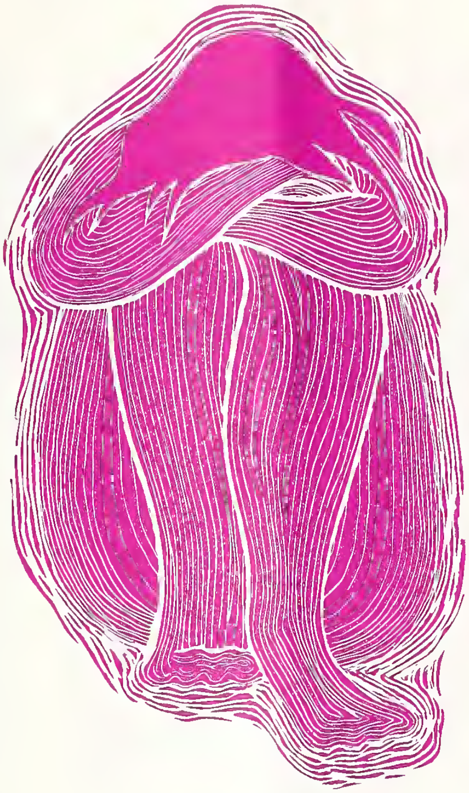
Robert Showers, noting that the damage caused by pornography and other related avenues of the sex industry (a $6-billion-a-year business almost controlled by organized crime in the United States, according to FBI reports) is often not realized until it is too late, emphasized, "Without religious conviction, it is hard to be credible in the fight against pornography."

Speaking the thoughts of at least one reforming addict, he continued, "The conspiracy of silence is Satan's greatest tool."

Peter W. Morris is a free-lance writer and photographer from Lenoir, N.C. His article is reprinted with permission from the Mennonite Brethren Herald, *3-169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5.*

Defining pornography

Ann Weber Becker



". . . perhaps the most devastating damage of a pornographic culture is its influence on woman's self-concepts."

To name a scandal for what it is undermines its power. In Madeline L'Engle's *A Wind in the Door*, Meg must name the Echthroi (evil personified) in order to save her little brother's life. After a painful struggle, she eventually succeeds: the Echthroi are named, her brother lives, and good triumphs over evil. (You really must read it.)

Naming pornography for what it is undermines its power. Defining pornography is one of many actions concerned Christians can take to sensitize themselves and their communities to its influence.

I will approach the task of naming from five directions: etymologically, a sampling from "comprehensive" definitions, descriptively, statistically and relationally.

1. Etymologically. Our English word "pornography" stems from two Greek roots: *porne* (female captive, slave or the lowest class of prostitute) and *graphos* (writing or drawing). Thus the etymology of "pornography" links the word with: (a) women, (b) graphic portrayal and (c) inequality of relationship with men.

It is important from the outset to distinguish "pornography" from "erotica." Based on the Greek root *eros* (passionate love or desire for a particular person), erotica describes materials used for the purposes of arousal and entertainment. Unlike pornography, erotica is characterized by a respectful affirmation of human personality and sexuality, free from violence, abuse and degradation.

2. Comprehensive definitions. Attempts at comprehensive definitions of pornography tend to reflect the three meanings implicit in the Greek root. Four such definitions follow. Each highlights at least one unique insight.

The Ottawa City Hall Council defines pornography as "material that is intended to demean the role of women and men in society or associates violence with sexuality, male and female, or that displays sexuality between nonconsenting individuals" (Frieda Esau, *Pornographic Background Paper: An Outline*, p. 2, 1984).

From our word study, we might expect "women" here instead of "individuals." Sadly, the growing use of children in pornography necessitates this broader definition. Not just women, but men too are "demeaned" by pornography. Oppressed and oppressor need liberation.

According to the Saskatchewan Action Committee, pornography is "any material that depicts violence, submission, coercion, ridicule, degradation and humiliation of any human being, whether this material is sexually explicit or not, and which condones or otherwise endorses such behavior for the purposes of sexual stimulation or pleasure" (Kathleen Storrie, *Evangelical Women's Census Update*, p. 1, June-August 1984).

This more descriptive definition focuses on the intent of pornography, namely, bringing "violence, submission, etc." into the realm of sexuality. Material need not be sexually explicit to render this distortion.

In the United States, pornography is legally defined as "a communication (pictorial, verbal or acted out before spectators) that is meant predominantly to appeal to prurient interest (a morbid interest in sex) and that does not have enough literary, artistic or scientific value to outweigh the prurient appeal" (Ernest Van Den Haag, *Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality*, p. 66, August 1984).

This definition raises an important variable: context. Not all material representing degrading sexual encounter is in itself pornographic. As horrifying as it might be, the Canadian film *Not a Love Story* depicts a constructive usage of potentially pornographic material—for the sake of raising our awareness. The film's context is not one of advocating or endorsing degradation but of "moral realism" and education. The film helps define pictorially the problem we are defining here with words. Artists too may depict "offensive" realities in the context of critique or prophetic insight.

The 1985 document on sexuality by the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church defines pornography as "any material depicting sexual activity which, by design and emphasis, encourages and promotes the desire in the observer to engage in illicit sexual activity" (*Human Sexuality in the Christian Life*, p. 140).

This document takes sides on one oft-cited controversy: Does exposure to pornography satisfy prurient interests (thus reducing sexual violence)? Or does it encourage these interests (thereby increasing sexual violence)? Substantial evidence supports the Mennonite document's view that pornography contributes to illicit sexual activity, such as rape or incest.

3. Descriptively. What images have been used to describe pornography? It has been called a "societal poison," "violence in the name of sex," "the undiluted essence of anti-female propaganda" and "doing dirt on sex." One description points to the roots of our society: "When we talk about porno, we are not talking about depictions of sex or love but about a deep and abiding hate" (Maude Barlow, *Toronto Globe and Mail*, March 14, 1983).

4. Statistically. Porn is big business. Its estimated annual revenue approaches the combined incomes of the conventional record and movie businesses—with X- and R-rated movies considered "conventional." This amounts to nearly $8 billion in the United States and $500 million in Canada (Kathleen Storrie, *op cit*). The combined circulations of *Playboy* and *Penthouse* exceed those of *Time* and *Newsweek* put together (*Ibid.*). As prolific as the golden arches are, estimates claim that in the United States "adult bookstores" outnumber McDonald's restaurants several times (Nelson Price, "Pornography and Sexual Violence," *Engage/Social Action*, p. 13, July-August 1985). To top things off, child pornography involves more than 300,000 children under 16 (*Ibid.*, p. 12).

Pornography is big business

Playboy, with a circulation of 4,209,824 (est. 1984) did a business of $171,354,000 (est. 1984).

Penthouse, with a circulation of 3,485,709 (est. 1984) had a revenue of $169,142,000 (est. 1984).

Hustler, with a circulation of 921,438 (est. 1984) had receipts of $44,527,000 (est. 1984).

*From *The Folio:* 400/1985

5. Relationally. Pornography impacts people: women, men and the relationships between them. And here—in relationships—may rest the most telling definition of pornography. As one man put it, "In our patriarchal culture, pornography is the epitome of explicit woman-hating, in which women are objectified and reduced to body parts, available to all men. Pornography is about this power over women much more than it is about nudity or sexuality or fantasy" (Dexter Guerrieri, "Pornography and Silent Men," *Changing Men*, p. 9, Fall 1985).

Perhaps then, pornography and patriarchy are profoundly inter-related, embodying the alliance of symptom and disease. Pornography helps institutionalize the culture that embraces male supremacy, to the extent that the two become mutually reinforcing. Consider the following commentaries: "Softcore pornography, such as *Playboy* and *Penthouse*, poses a more serious threat to females than hardcore pornography because it is so insidious and it masquerades as serious. After all, millions of men (and women) read *Playboy* for the interviews and articles, although no one has ever explained why interviews with presidents and shots of nude women go together so well" (Ruthann Robson, "Pornography, Power and the First Amendment," *Engage/Social Action*, p. 36, July-August 1985).

"Pornography keeps sexism sexy. It keeps sexism necessary for some people to have sexual feelings. It makes reciprocity make you go limp. It makes mutuality leave you cold. It makes tenderness and intimacy and caring make you feel like you're going to disappear into a void. It makes justice the opposite of erotic, it makes injustice a sexual thrill" (John Stoltenberg, "Pornography and Freedom," *Changing Men*, p. 6, Fall 1985).

But perhaps the most devastating damage of a pornographic culture is its influence on women's self-concepts. Women cannot avoid being influenced by distorted, manufactured images of themselves that try to force them out of the whole, degradation-free images of God in which they were created. Getting in touch with God-in-us in this cultural context can be a frightening step and exhausting to sustain over the long haul.

For the journey, we must recognize pornography for what it is. Name it. Undermine its power.

And that is what definitions are all about.

Ann Weber Becker, 607 College Ave., Goshen, IN 46526, is working toward a Master in Divinity degree at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. When not studying, she writes hymn texts and plays violin and kazoo duets. Reprinted by permission from MCC Women's Concerns Report *January-February 1986, p. 3.*

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

The Olongapo cycle

Jan Lugibihl

"I know my work is wrong, but I believe God has never left me."

Many things have become normal to me. The planes from Subic Bay U.S. Naval Base flying overhead. The bars that line the street leading from the main gate of that base. The dancers, hospitality women and streetwalkers—about 15,000 Filipinas—who work on that street and the side streets leading from it. The rhythm of their lives here—four to six weeks when only a few of the American sailors stationed at Subic Bay come out to the bars, followed by four to six days when a U.S. aircraft carrier arrives with its support ships, and 6,000-10,000 U.S. sailors on leave flood the streets looking for rest and, mostly, sexual recreation.

This cycle repeats itself year after year. During the times of no activity when women are bored, they have time to talk.

I haven't been here a long time, but long enough to raise a troubling question, one I know I must search for an answer to if I am going to continue to live here. A question the women bring to me constantly, in many different forms: "Am I a sinner?"

Perhaps for you to understand why I have no ready answer for that question I need to tell you one woman's story. The essentials of her story differ only in specific detail from many other women here. Multiply it hundreds, even thousand of times, and you will begin to experience the Olongapo I am coming to know.

Dee is the first woman we met here. Since then we have sat with her often, laughing and crying with her, learning to know and love her.

Dee is 31 years old. She came here from Manila three years ago to work as a maid. She hoped she could make more money in that job than she did as a bus conductor in Manila—money she would send to her poor family. Soon, however, the woman she was working for told her she would help her find a better-paying job as a waitress in one of the restaurants on the strip, the bar-lined street leading from the naval base. Then, about a year and a half ago, she moved to her present, even better-paying work as a hospitality woman (prostitute) in another bar.

During Olongapo's cycle when an aircraft carrier is in and she has a customer, Dee has food to eat, can pay her rent and even has money to send to her family. A sailor pays 250 pesos (about $13 U.S.) to her club for her time and she receives 170 pesos of that. During the rest of the cycle when no ships are in, she is often broke and hungry, along with most of the other women in Olongapo.

Dee's bar is not fancy, nor is she. She shares the dream of the other 14,999 Filipinas working in Olongapo: to meet a sailor who will love her, marry her and take her to the States, where all will be well.

Sometimes Dee talks of what she would really like to do—study to be a preschool teacher.

Sometimes she talks of returning to her family. In her more realistic moments she believes that impossible. Being a prostitute is a cause for shame and embarrassment in the Philippines. Even families who know the source of the money their daughters send them each month often pretend ignorance.

Jan Lugibihl, left, visits with one of her Filipina friends.

D'ROCK
WANTED
SEXY & YOUNG AGO-GO
DANCERS - COUNTER GIRLS
W/Good Salary & Commission
See the Manager

Ad on Olangapo street

Olongapo, the city in which Brenda Stoltzfus and Jan Lugibihl are serving for MCC, lies just outside Subic Naval Base, the largest U.S. naval base outside the United States. The economy of Olongapo City revolves almost entirely around the presence of the base, from the Filipinos who work inside the base to the many native furniture stores to the people who scavenge the garbage dump to the Negrito people who train the U.S. military in jungle survival to the hospitality women (prostitutes) who work in the many bars and massage parlors lining the streets. Figures of between 10,000 and 15,000 women are often cited. A large aircraft carrier generally has about 6,000 sailors plus several escort ships.

The hospitality women come to Olongapo from all over the Philippines. A majority come from poor families in the provinces and send money home to support their families. They often come hoping to work as a waitress or marry an American sailor and go to the United States. Most bar owners are foreigners, generally American or Chinese. When a ship is in, a woman can earn a relatively good wage. When no ships are in, she has trouble buying food. There are large ships in on an average of every two months for three to five days.

Some families accept it but tell the women—their daughters—they never want to see them again. Others, like Dee's, pray for their daughters and try to convince them to leave Olongapo.

There is much more to Dee than the above facts. Dee almost always has a customer when a ship is in, often a sailor who returns to her each of the two or three times a year his ship is in port. She never forgets any of the men she meets and speaks of them as a sister might talk about a favorite brother. She advises them, washes their clothes, helps them ease their loneliness and gives them the sex they pay for. Her women friends tell her she is too nice to the men.

Sometimes she wonders about that. "It seems like the women who take advantage of men and steal their money are the ones who get married and go to the States, while I stay here. Maybe they're right, I am too nice."

Dee also believes in God. Sometimes when she has no customer she asks us to pray for her to have a man. Other times she says, "I give my hands and heart to God and God uses me. When people say God brings war and suffering, I say, no. What God wants for the world is more love."

Then she says, "I know my work is wrong, but I believe God has never left me."

I bring that statement home with me every night. We hear it, in different forms, from almost every woman we talk with here. I struggle to find a response. A part of me wants to affirm what Dee says. I could do that with integrity because I believe that Dee and the others would not be in Olongapo if they were not driven here by poverty. If the United States removed itself from Filipino affairs and removed its military bases from this country, Olongapo and the lives of the women would be different.

I am a feminist who believes God wants me to work for liberation for women and other oppressed people. I know what happens to women here in Olongapo is not liberating. Women are exploited here by the U.S sailors and by an overwhelming poverty that makes working as prostitutes in Olongapo seem like their last resort for survival. Exploitation is sin.

But I also wonder if that response is enough for Dee and the others. Are they searching for a different kind of response too? One that touches them as individuals and affirms them as special, cared for by God?

So I find myself struggling with the question of personal sin. I believe sex without commitment is wrong, destructive to those involved. I have little difficulty saying American sailors are sinning here. But what do I say to these women who are becoming my friends?

I cannot so easily say to them, "Prostitution is sin. Nice women are not prostitutes." For they are nice women. I feel caring and love coming from them to me and I see it at work among them. Often I feel God's presence and grace when I am with them. I shrink too from telling them I think they are sinning because I know my own relationships are not always healthy.

I wonder, however, if I can say with integrity, "Yes, what you do here is sin, but I believe there is power and healing in naming our sins, repenting for them and accepting the understanding, grace and forgiveness of God."

Four months in Olongapo of hearing the stories of women, being invited to share their lives, growing to love them. Four months of great joy and confusion. I know now that no matter how the expression of that confusion makes me sound to you who care about justice, it is time to ask for your help. So I share my confusion with you, my sisters and brothers. I wonder if it is right, or possible, to search for a response to personal sin in a situation where the structural sins are so obvious and overpowering. Does it diminish my belief in working for liberation to do so?

How would you, sisters and brothers, respond to the cry of Dee and the other women: "What I do here is wrong, but I believe God has never left me"?

Jan Lugibihl, MCC worker in Olongapo, the Philippines, can be reached by contacting Mennonite Central Committee Information Services, Box M, Akron, PA 17501.

The kingdom of God is among you

Jacob J. Enz

A gifted screenwriter and a house painter—a most unlikely pair.

A bar in Boston called "The Sevens"—a most unlikely place.

A house painter's comment that turned the life of the atheistic screenwriter around, "I must find a church to observe Christmas midnight mass."

The Christmas (1985) issue of the *New York Times* magazine, a rather unlikely source. The feature article titled "Returning to Church."

Dan Wakefield, a novelist and journalist as well as a screenwriter, gives a recital of his life that led up to his decision to return to church.

"In the year that led to my going to Christmas Eve service I felt I was headed for the edge of a cliff. I could have scored at the top of those magazine tests that list the greatest stresses of life, for that year saw the dissolution of a seven-year relationship with a woman I had fully expected to live with the rest of my life. I ran out of money, left the work I was doing, the house I owned, the city I was living in and attended the funeral of my father in May and my mother in November."

Some comments about going to church are noteworthy from the pen of Wakefield. "Going to church, even belonging to it, did not solve life's problems—if anything they seemed to intensify around this time—but it gave a sense of living in a larger context, of being part of something greater than what I could see through the tunnel vision of my personal concerns. . . . I find strength in the hard wisdom of those who have delved much deeper into the spiritual realm than I, like Henri Nouwen."

"Christianity is not for getting your life together." These candid words from his friend Henri Nouwen surprised Wakefield. Even Nouwen sometimes finds himself in situations of confusion and darkness.

"About a year ago," Wakefield concludes, "I felt as if finally with God's help I was on the right track in my own journey. Then I had an experience like running head on into a wall. First, shock, then a kind of psychic pain as unrelenting as a dentist's drill. And in the torment I prayed, and there was no relief, and twice I turned back to my old way of dealing with things by trying to numb the pain with drugs. Throughout all this, I never lost faith in God, never imagined he was not there but only that his presence was obscured. Then the storm broke, like a fever, and I felt in touch again and in the light. I was grateful, but I also knew such storms would come again, perhaps even more violently."

"We carry around in our bodies many of the atoms of Julius Caesar." This came from a faculty member of the department of physics at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Julius Caesar lived before Jesus of Nazareth. The physics professor was speaking in the Pro-Cathedral (Episcopal) in Baltimore. It was at a Sunday afternoon vesper. The church as the body of Christ was the subject of his proclamation that day.

Without realizing it, I was hearing about the holaverse for the first time. In the 1982 publication of *Space, Time and Medicine* by Larry Dossey, M.D., I was seeing the word "holaverse" in print for the first time.

Einstein physics must be taken much more seriously in the practice of medicine. Space and time are used much too strongly in the way in which we look at life and health. We think of ourselves almost only as individuals distinct from other individuals. Our interdependence is much greater than our independence.

We are bound in a living way to all of the people in the world today and to all of the people who have ever lived or who will live. We are as close to Pentecost as the 12 apostles. With our black friends we sing, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" and must answer, "Yes." Jesus said that the kingdom of God, the totality of the rule of God, is within you. In each one of us we carry the rule of God in faith, hope and love. As that faith, hope and love grows we understand how it may be said, as Paul put it, "Christ in you the hope of glory." Or consider Paul's, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Each one of us has "a little black box"—to use the figure of the recording device in passenger planes to keep a complete record of the conversation of the pilot and his associates. We hear of people close to death having the whole of their life brought before them.

The kingdom of God is always "becoming" in our midst. We will see it in special ways again at Saskatoon '86.

We should not be surprised at the fact of predictive prophecy when we have this view, this wholistic view, of the world. Consider German writer Heinrich Heine's fantastic prophecy about Germany in 1834: "Christianity—and this is its greatest merit," wrote Heine, "has occasionally calmed the brutal German lust for battle, but it cannot destroy that savage joy. And when once that restraining talisman, the Cross, is broken . . . the old stone gods will rise from unremembered ruins and Thor will leap to life at last and bring down his gigantic hammer on the Gothic cathedrals. . . . This is no mere fantasy. . . . The thought always precedes the act as the lightning the thunder. . . . Never doubt it; the hour will come."

Heine lived in the centuries rather than the hours. He let the ages speak to our days and years.

"Will you please leave the premises?"

continued on next page

A disciple went to a local recruiting office in northern Indiana.

"What would you think of your recruiting a young man later caught in a hot war? He pulls the trigger and kills a man. He realizes for the first time that he has a conscience about killing. The next thing he knows he has been hit himself and knows he is not ready to die. How would you feel about that?"

"I refuse to discuss it with you."

"But I pay my taxes, which help to pay your salary."

"I refuse to discuss it with you," he repeated.

"Are you a Christian?"

When his answer was yes, the recruiter was asked if he did not remember Jesus saying, "Love your enemies."

At that point the disciple was asked to leave.

It is not always comfortable to be a witness. Can this kind of assertiveness (or is it indeed pushy confrontation) be used of God to make people think? It is important to keep our peace witness closely linked to basic decisions about our accepting Messiah Jesus of Nazareth as Savior and Lord.

The kingdom of God invades a bar and turns a person's life around.

The kingdom of God invades the discipline of physics and confirms we were/are at Pentecost.

The kingdom of God invades an army recruiting station and asks some hard questions.

"The time has come. The kingdom of God is upon you. Repent and believe the gospel"—the words of Jesus when John the Baptist was arrested for saying the same things.

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TOGETHER

The church responds to pornography

John Regehr

The church must see its task in regard to the pornography industry quite apart from the fact that sex is now linked grotesquely with Christianity as well as with violence and horror. Though this linkage to religion will disgust people of faith, our motivation to action is not to be merely an abhorrence of this vulgar desecration but concern for the people who are being destroyed.

The church must be a model of mutual respect. Within this temple of God, this body of Christ, we must overcome all sexist attitudes and all exploitation of men and/or women and all repression of women and/or men. We must learn and teach the lovely art of valuing each person and cherishing each person's sexuality. In this regard, as in others, we count others as better than ourselves and look after others' interests (Philippians 2:3-4) in holiness and propriety. In these matters we must become the conscience of society.

The church must also model and teach wholesome personal self-respect, to each value his or her sexuality and regard it as holy ground, since it is woven into the very image of God in us.

We must guard against the presumptuous claim that we can in this age rise above our sexuality and be purely persons. We resist such a claim even though Jesus does make some enigmatic statement about the absence of marriage in the New Age, where we will be like the angels in heaven (Matthew 22:29-30). The New Testament does make it clear that, since the New Age has begun in Jesus Christ, something of the new life and the new relationships of the New Age can be realized already. However, to claim that we can live together in Christian community as asexual is foolhardy indeed. Jesus' words about being in the world but not of it (John 15:18-19; 17:11, 14-16) apply here as well. We acknowledge and respect our own sexuality and that of others, and we will not by any naive claim to immunity open ourselves to the risk of sexual impropriety. Nor will we, in the realistic acknowledgment of our sexuality, give to sexual functioning an inappropriate weight of importance. Our worth as people shall never be measured by our ability to achieve or effect orgasm.

The teaching task of the church is to help people of faith so to understand that they are loved by God that their response with their bodies will honor the Creator. We will covenant with God not to exploit our own or another's sexuality, not even in a put-down joke, for any gain whatever, not even for a crude laugh of approval from our comrades.

We will not use pornographic materials and allow ourselves to be lured into the gratification, either solo or communal, which such materials are designed to elicit.

Since "community tolerance" is a factor in determining what the courts define as obscene, the church has the task of instructing beyond its institutional borders so that its attitudes and practices are seen to be a functional and wholesome morality for society.

There is the additional responsibility of verbalizing the church's concerns and its understandings to state authorities. Counting on the democratic process and making an election issue of pornography is probably not the most effective route to go. Nor perhaps is the tactic of lobbying and pressuring. But certainly we must speak on behalf of God and people to those in whose hands civic authority rests. Prosecutors do better if they have a complaint (particularly in borderline cases) from someone who is willing to go to court and testify. The Christian must have the courage to do this but must do it in ways that do not destroy credibility. Puritanical and fanatical religious groups who use incendiary language probably don't help the cause of God.

The church must be a model of mutual respect.

The church has heart, and it hears the call of the heavenly Father to deal compassionately with those who are caught in any part of the pornographic industry, either as producers and distributors or as consumers. Children who are being exploited need people of integrity and compassion to speak for them and to shield and shelter them.

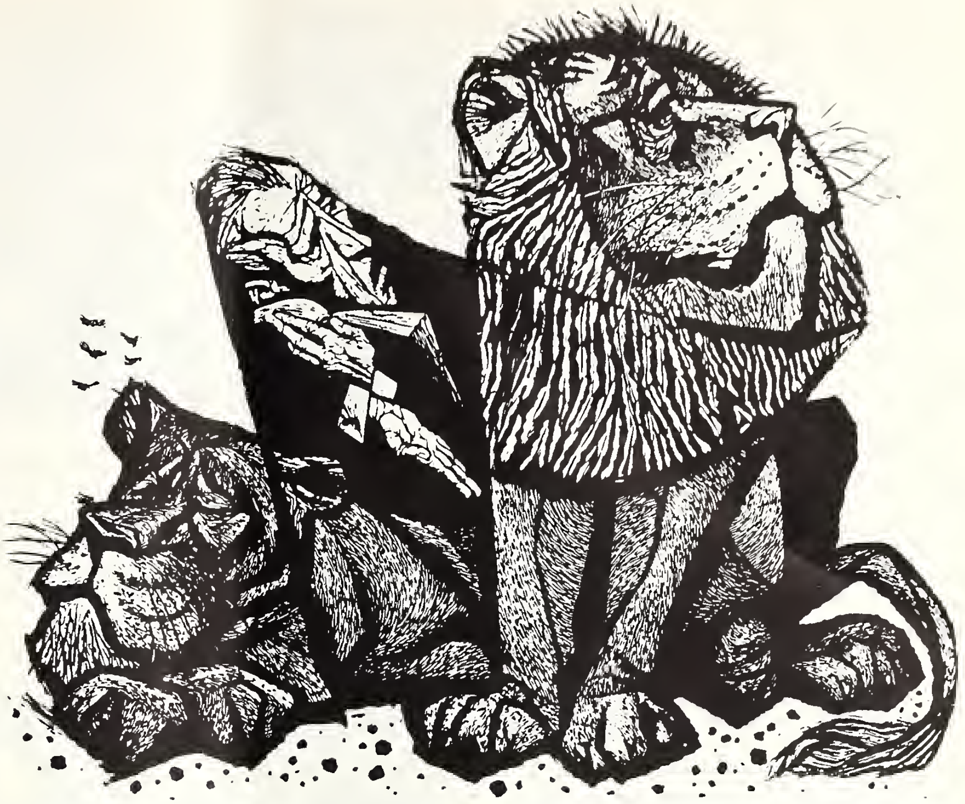
Adults who allow or offer themselves to be sexually exploited may do so for a time for the sheer excitement of it or the promise of quick and easy gain. When the thrill dulls, they may find themselves caught in a web and bound by fear of people and fear of poverty. In their fear they are blind to other options. Even those who are caught in that wicked system are redeemable. The church must take heart, hold fast to holiness with one hand and with the other reach for those caught ones for whom the church can become a place of freedom. While we are helping others to become free, we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, lest we be ensnared by the very sin from which we are seeking to extricate others (Galatians 6:1).

A further task of the church is to help the consumer become free from the enticement of and enslavement to pornographic material. We need spiritual guides who are capable of dealing with such people, and we must create a climate in which they feel safe to disclose their bondage. Merely helping these caught ones to crank up their willpower may not be enough. They need to be overwhelmed by the love of God, an awareness that can be mediated by the unconditional love and acceptance of shepherding people. One who accepts deeply the reality of God's love and responds to God in self-abandoning love will find holiness and righteousness an easy yoke, i.e. a yoke that fits and therefore makes possible the plowing of even a tough furrow (Matthew 11:28-30).

Summary: "Now these things occurred as examples, to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: 'The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.' We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day 23,000 of them died. We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

"These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:6-13 *NIV*).

John Regehr is associate professor of practical theology at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, 77 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg, MB R2L 1L1. This is an edited excerpt from an article written for the MCC Manitoba peace and social concerns committee.



This lino cut by Robert Hodgell was done as a response to the biblical story of Daniel in the lions' den. Here a man of God is able to relax in the midst of a life-threatening environment because he trusts God. It may be a good reminder to us in today's confusing world.

Good morning, world

Tamara Lattin

Good morning, world.
I close my eyes and begin my day,
fearing to get up from where I lay.

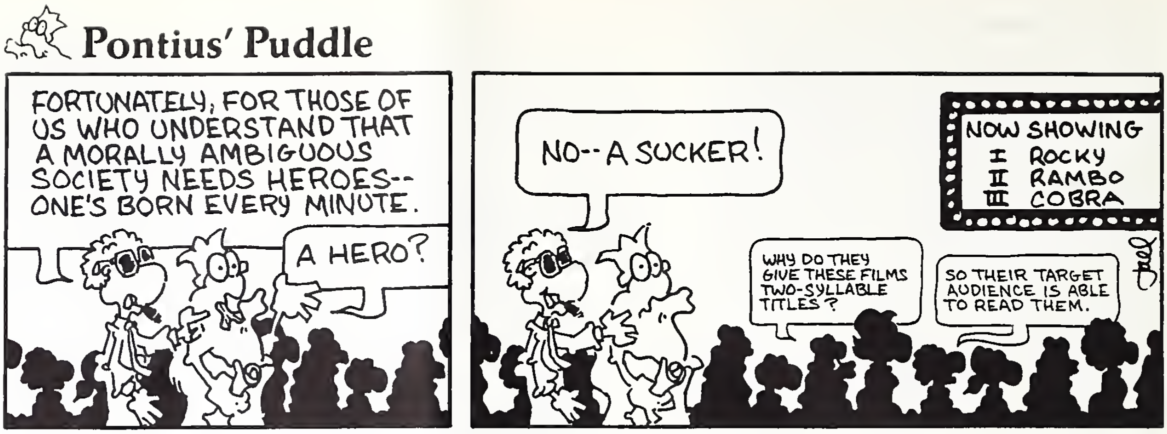
Good morning. How are you?
Oh, I'm fine.
Not able to walk a straight line.

Been five months now,
It's funny, I knew I'd be fired.
Looking in the paper, nobody needs to be hired.

My stomach aches at noon.
The change in my pocket went far five years ago,
I have to make this last, they say, eat slow.

Searching all day, tired, I walk home.
A huge old building, at the end of this block.
Ten flights up, let's see, which key to which lock.

Good night, world.
Breathing comes in a few long sighs.
Oh Lord, I sleep now, open my eyes.


Pontius' Puddle
FORTUNATELY, FOR THOSE OF US WHO UNDERSTAND THAT A MORALLY AMBIGUOUS SOCIETY NEEDS HEROES-- ONE'S BORN EVERY MINUTE.
A HERO?
NO-- A SUCKER!
NOW SHOWING
I ROCKY
II RAMBO
III COBRA
WHY DO THEY GIVE THESE FILMS TWO-SYLLABLE TITLES?
SO THEIR TARGET AUDIENCE IS ABLE TO READ THEM.

NEWS

Plans made for 1987 General Council

MWC executive begins faith study process

Taipei, Taiwan (MWC)—Responding to worldwide calls for more attention to the question of what Mennonites believe, the Mennonite World Conference executive committee decided in its annual sessions here to set in motion a process that will give faith discussions a global emphasis in the period between now and the 1990 XII MWC Assembly in Winnipeg.

The nine-member committee from six countries meets once a year to direct MWC activity in the period between triennial General Council sessions. This year's executive committee meetings took place May 9-14 at the Golden China Hotel in Taipei, a setting which also enabled several participants to attend the III Asia Mennonite Conference at Taipei the following weekend.

MWC assemblies are "always a family gathering, getting to know each other," commented president Ross Bender of the United States. "Is that enough or can we also do more?" he asked, in endorsing the idea of a faith and life focus in the next few years.

Reporting on his extensive world travels the last few months, executive secretary Paul Kraybill highlighted a recurring theme from the churches—"What do we believe? What is it that really brings us together and makes us one body?"

To launch such an international discussion, the committee approved the forming of an ad hoc study commission with a seven-step task: (1) Prepare a study document based on the XII Assembly theme (to be chosen in 1987); (2) Arrange for inter-Mennonite study groups among congregations throughout the world; (3) Plan for coordinators in each continent to gather material and draft preliminary statements; (4) Integrate these materials into a single document for discussion in a Faith and Life consultation just prior to the Winnipeg assembly; (5) Give leadership to a study process that continues throughout the assembly; (6) Prepare a statement for adoption by the Winnipeg assembly; and (7) Edit a publication after the assembly to summarize the findings and results of the study process.

Supporting the idea of preparing a formal conference statement at Winnipeg—a message to the churches and the world—committee members noted that at the last two MWC assemblies in Wichita, Kan., and Strasbourg, France, no statement has been made.

"We discussed critical issues, yet in the end we didn't say anything officially," commented Hiroshi Yanada of Japan. Added Louise Nussbaumer of France, "Winnipeg should not just be a touristic celebration. Celebrate yes, but also confer." She urged at the same time that the process not be so heavily theological that the average church member loses interest.

Choosing the eventual theme for Winnipeg will be a task for the 1987 General Council meeting, planned for July 14-19 at Filadelfia, Paraguay. The General Council is the decision-making body with representation from every conference worldwide affiliated with MWC.

Mbonza Kikunga of Zaire and Hiroshi Yanada of Japan consult during MWC executive committee meetings at Taipei, Taiwan.

The executive committee decided to send three possible themes to council members and church conferences for their consideration: One would have a theological orientation—"One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism"; another would take an outreach approach—"Witnessing to Christ in Today's World"; a third would emphasize discipleship—"Walking in the Resurrection."

Council members, of course, will also be free to select another theme of their own choosing.

The executive committee did make a final decision on the theme for the Filadelfia meeting. It will be "The Lordship of Christ." At the suggestion of Luis Elier Rodriguez of Puerto Rico, vice president for Latin America, the book of Revelation will be the focus of study.

Said Rodriguez, "Apocalyptic literature is written in the context of perse-

The U.S. government's efforts to quarantine the sanctuary movement have been like a shot of adrenaline instead. Just look at the statistics, its members say. A year ago 100 churches across the country were offering sanctuary—illegally—to Central Americans seeking refuge in the United States from political repression and violence in their countries. Now the number has topped 300. The government had apparently hoped that its six-month-long trial of nearly 20 church people in Tucson, Ariz., would put a damper on the sanctuary movement. Eight of them were convicted recently, but the movement is stronger than ever.

The Reagan administration's proposed budget cuts in the nation's food stamp program for 1987 constitute a "callous disregard for the hunger problem in the United States," according to Bard Shollenberger of Bread for the World at congressional hearings on federal food assistance programs. Shollenberger also criticized the administration's proposed cuts in the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program, which provides supplemental funding to churches and private organizations operating soup kitchens, food banks and shelters for the homeless.

According to local church and government leaders, evangelist Billy Graham's Greater Washington Crusade had an amazing impact on the city through unprecedented unity and cooperation among many diverse groups. More than 630 churches participated in the year-long preparations for the eight-day crusade. The average black attendance was over 30 percent at each of the services.

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cution. It is written with pages of blood of a church affirming God's kingdom over the state. It is a church with an absence of peace. There is a strong parallel with the situation in Latin America today."

Some members expressed hesitation with Revelation—"It is the number one book which divides us," observed vice president for Europe Samuel Gerber of Switzerland—but in the end the panel decided the risk was worth taking.

Mennonites of the Caribbean, Central and South America represent at least a dozen language groups, ranging over an area from northern Mexico to Argentina and Chile. Since it is nearly impossible for such a group to meet regularly, the General Council sessions will serve to some extent as a regional Latin America convention.

Observers from churches of the region will be invited, in addition to the General Council members, and most if not all of the main speakers will be drawn from the area. Latin American members "need to hear more of their own voices," was the comment of Paul Kraybill.

Executive committee members confessed some uncertainty as to what decisions are properly made by them, and which should be reserved for the General Council. Basically, said Kraybill, the General Council sets policy directions; the Executive Committee approves year-to-year activity based on those policies.

Another structural concern was resolved with the decision to bring International Mennonite Peace Committee fully within the MWC fold as a subcommittee.

Mbonza Kikunga of Zaire, vice president for Africa, questioned the move, suggesting IMPC has too political an orientation for official affiliation with MWC. Others stressed the need for our peace witness to be related more closely to the life and faith of our church. The majority felt IMPC should be given a home and that its place is logically under the MWC umbrella.

General budgets of $132,820 for 1986 and $161,220 for 1987 were approved unanimously.

Paul Kraybill described a five-year plan to bring supporting church conference contributions to 100 percent of general budget needs, which would end the current partial reliance on funds from private donors. The committee approved continued private fund-raising in the interim.

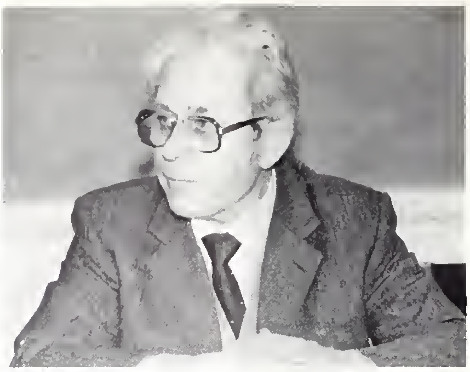
Also approved was the new communications department, including employment of David Shelly as half-time editor; publication of quarterly magazines *Courier* in English and *Correo* in Spanish; and distribution of a biweekly news service.

Another publication project, looking ahead to 1990, will be a new *Mennonite World Handbook*, taking the place of the 1978 edition prepared for the X Assembly at Wichita. In addition to the statistical data on the worldwide Mennonite churches, the *Handbook* will contain a section of informative articles. One idea that drew enthusiastic support is a feature that would incorporate new research on Mennonite martyrs through the centuries.
David Shelly

AMBS graduates 54

Goshen Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Biblical Seminary, the schools that constitute Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., graduated 54 students May 30. Pictured at the graduate breakfast are (back row, from left) Jim Maust, Carl L. Wiebe, Herman Wiebe, Fred Lichti, Don Patterson, Don Penner, Vernon Rempel, Steve Gehman; (third row) John Ulrich, Curt Kuhns, Randy Roth, Otis Hochstetler, Carl Horner, Fred Klitzke, Sam Holiday, Edwin Rempel, Ross Miller, Ewald Goetz, John Lamoreau; (second row) Janet Breneman, Ilse Yoder, Wayne Nitzsche, Eleanor Beachy, Takeji Nomura, Joan Blatz, Ralph Lind, Doris Rempel, Jan Janzen, Rick Janzen; (front) Ray Hurst, Brenda Martin Hurst, Doris Weber, Nancy Kerr, Roger Smith, Mildred Freeman, Sharon Gehman, Elisabeth Gingrich, Karen Martens-Zimmerly, Rick Alderfer. Not pictured: C. Paul Amstutz, Jeff Baumgartner, Dan Brilhart, Steve Cave, Jim Compton-Schmidt, Arnold Dietz, Terri Enns, Robert Gridley, Marlin Kym, David Overmyer, Louann Richcreek, Javier Roman, Peter Scheffler-Kroeker, Bonita Weber-Lehman, Yobu Yaguchi.

The 19th annual West Coast Mennonite Relief Sale held at Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College April 11-12 brought a crowd of about 8,000. The two items bringing the highest bids were a design quilt that brought $4,000 and a 1952 Chrysler sedan that brought $4,100. Sale proceeds added up to $133,000, slightly less than last year's proceeds.



Traugott (left) and Katie Quiring, now residing in West Germany, visited Winnipeg in early April. From 1973-1985 he served as superintendent for Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan and Turkmenistan churches of the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists in the Soviet Union. Quiring said they moved to West Germany to be with the rest of their family. He also said they were tired of the constant surveillance in the USSR. While religious freedom has increased greatly from earlier days of hiding his Bible in chicken nests and in straw piles, he said, Christians continue to live under pressure.

Education staff changes precipitate refining of policy

Newton, Kan.—The General Board executive committee (in session May 30 and 31) has called for an evaluation of procedures for work performance review and a process for handling grievances of conference employees. New policy is being formulated for releasing staff or not renewing a service term. Under consideration is a way to appeal decisions to release staff or not renew a service term before that decision becomes final and public.

This call comes as a result of a decision made last March by the Commission on Education, resulting in three staff people not continuing for the coming triennium. Executive secretary J. W. Sprunger has resigned effective Jan. 31, 1987. Myrna and Randy Krehbiel, family life coordinators, have had their employment terminated as of the end of August, according to plans.

Roots of part of the situation go back three years when implementation of the Commission on Education's new structure changed lines of accountability within the commission, from staff to commission and from staff to the executive secretary. This restructuring was approved by both commission members and staff in September 1982.

In addition, a directive was given: the executive secretary of the Commission on Education was encouraged to spend more time in the member congregations of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Then-new executive secretary J. W. Sprunger proceeded to do this energetically and skillfully, according to staff and commission members.

Three years later, some of the 10 or so education staff people and some of the 14 (volunteer) commission members are wondering if the new structure was humanly possible.

Speaking for himself as chairman of the commission, Fred Unruh, Winnipeg, says, "We have celebrated many achievements in the Commission on Education in recent years. But we have also known hard times of discouragement and conflict. Personal conflicts have eroded our hopes for team work. We feel much disappointment and grief for the misunderstandings and difficulties we have experienced."

Staff concern for work relationships was raised early in the triennium. With the help of an outside consultant, concentrated work on relational issues was done by the entire staff from March 1985 to January 1986.

Some staff members were surprised by the action of Krehbiel's termination, saying that the standard procedure for the dismissal of employees is to go through a process of review and consultation.

Ron Kraybill of Mennonite Conciliation Services was asked to mediate among Krehbiels and representatives of the commission. Kraybill describes the situation as "a complex and ambiguous series of events in which no one party is clearly at fault."

Maynard Shelly, COE staff member, says, "The mission to find renewal and healing for the Commission on Education cannot be fulfilled without a large measure of self-sacrifice from us all."

Unruh adds, "Commission and staff are devoting themselves to finding healing and resolution."

Clearer policy being formulated by the General Board may help prevent a recurrence of this kind of experience.

Muriel T. Stackley

Employment opportunities

Swift Current Bible Institute invites applications for the following positions:

Houseparents. Responsibilities: relate to young adults, providing counsel and spiritual direction in a residential setting. Other tasks, depending upon interest, could include teaching or directing the sports program.

Voluntary service cooks (two positions available). Responsibilities: planning, preparing and serving of meals under the direction of the head cook.

The above positions begin **Sept. 1**.

Direct your applications and inquiries to:
Personnel Committee
Box 1268
Swift Current, SK S9H 3X4.

SOCIAL SERVICE POSITIONS

Director
Broadway Assistance Center - Denver

Intake Case Worker
The Free Store - Cincinnati

Social Worker
Ministerial Alliance Retirement Center - Cleveland

Food & Clothing Coordinator
Howard Area Community Center - Chicago

Will you help?

VOLUNTEERS live together, receive room and board, health insurance and a small personal monthly allowance.

MVS BELIEVES in following Jesus through a lifestyle of service, simplicity, social concern and non-violence.

MENNONITE VOLUNTARY SERVICE

722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100

The Mennonite Camping Association held its biannual conference March 24-27 in Brooksville, Fla. The 83 registrants from across Canada and the United States were challenged to view their spiritual call as camp directors, board members, spouses, etc., as important in Christian ministry and outreach within the Mennonite missions scheme of Christian education. John and Naomi Lederach, coordinators of community education at Philhaven Hospital, Mount Gretna, Pa., addressed the conference theme, "Church Camping as a Setting for Nurturing Persons."

The relationship of farmers to the land is much more than an economic tie, Waldemar Janzen told participants in a Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored Faith and Farming Seminar held in Portage La Prairie, Man. Janzen, a professor of Old Testament at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, described a model of land ownership drawn from biblical concepts, which sees God as the owner of the land who "invites us as his long-term guests." That has important implications for how we treat the land.

As middle-class North Americans snub smoking in increasing numbers, Third World tobacco promoters are doing fast business. What does the tobacco industry have to say about this? The World Development Education News Service quotes an industry spokesman as saying, "People in developing countries don't have a long enough life expectancy to worry about smoking-related problems."

Council on Church and Media discusses marketing

Waterloo, Ont. (CCM)—"Marketing is people . . . inviting people to invest time and money to a worthy cause," said Daniel Kauffman in his keynote address to about 35 people attending the second annual meeting of the Council on Church and Media.

The theme of "Marketing Our Mission" was discussed by CCM, a forum of Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren and Mennonite churches, at Conrad Grebel College here May 27-28. Meetinghouse, an association of editors of Brethren in Christ and Mennonite publications, joined the council for plenary sessions.

Kauffman, assistant to the president of Goshen (Ind.) College for special projects, has spent nearly 40 years of service to the church in development and marketing. He said the primary notion of marketing is the exchange of wants, needs and interests that are to be satisfied. Many church agencies, he claimed, need to find methods of communicating in tangible ways about the intangible services they provide. Kauffman said people have a God-given instinct to want to help others, something church agencies can satisfy.

Kauffman

Kauffman admitted that some Mennonite people hold marketing and public relations suspect. But he contended that it's time to bring marketing procedures to the church with integrity.

Kauffman observed that church agencies need a strong denominational thrust on a theology of stewardship, which he suggested would address the meaning, role, ethics and morality of money. According to Kauffman, it would not be an emphasis on money but on the management of the gospel. He explained that Christians need to use the tools God has given them in the stewardship of the gospel. *Phil Richard*

YOU STILL HAVE TIME

to register for the
Aid to Christian
Teaching (ACT)
weekend, Sept. 25-28,
1986, Whiting, N.J.

Send inquiries or
registrations to:

Marianne Zuercher
Box 116
Souderton, PA 18964
(215) 723-5513.

Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Service, Inc. (MHRS) is seeking a director to begin duties as soon as possible. Responsibilities include all operations and programs, personnel management, financial and long-range planning, publicity, fund raising and public relations. Salary negotiable.

MHRS is a non-profit construction company, serving the needs of the elderly and low-income people. Applications from women and minorities are encouraged.

Send resume to:
MHRS
2038 N. Broadway
Wichita, KS 67214.

West Coast Mennonite Writers' Workshop

Oct. 17-19, 1986

- Keynote speaker: Katie Funk Wiebe
- 35 workshops to choose from
- Storytelling
- Poetry reading

For further details contact:

Western Mennonite School
9045 Wallace Road, NW
Salem, OR 97304

Telephone: (503) 363-2000

Seven students graduated from Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Man., April 20. Two received the diploma in Christian education, and five received the certificate of attendance. Ray Hamm, pastor at Altona Mennonite Church, challenged the graduates based on the theme of walking in the light.

In 1984 the government of India ruled that British Commonwealth citizens were required for the first time to obtain visas and residence permits. People speculate that the ruling was made to prevent overseas Sikhs from returning quickly to India. But the ruling also limits the number of North Americans who can work in Mennonite missions there. Visas and residence permits are difficult to obtain, says Paul Myers, Mennonite Central Committee secretary for South Asia.

"With joy I saw Miss Ho baptized," says missionary Roland Brown, former medical director at Mennonite Christian Hospital. "She was a patient of mine." Five years ago, because of a frustrated love affair, Miss Ho attempted suicide by drinking acid. Her esophagus was burned so that it strictured down completely. Multiple major operations at other hospitals in Taipei were not successful. In June 1985 Brown operated, and she could take food by mouth. Miss Ho was impressed with the Christian care at Mennonite Christian Hospital and attended Po Ai Mennonite Church, where she was baptized just before Christmas.

Asia Mennonite Conference gains sense of direction

Taipei, Taiwan (MWC)—Adoption of a written "Statement of Purpose" and the drafting of a letter of concern to governments on the question of nuclear power were two significant steps taken as delegates from six nations met here May 14-18 for Asia Mennonite Conference sessions.

The meetings, held at two sites in the Taipei area, drew some 70 people, including Mennonites from India, Indonesia, Australia, Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong, as well as mission agency personnel and several Mennonite World Conference executive committee members, staff and spouses.

Opening the discussion on a proposed statement of purpose, president Hiroshi Yanada of Japan noted the AMC had no approved constitution. Organizations can exist without constitutional backing, he noted—"Japan has a large military with no constitutional support"—but he suggested the delegates needed to clarify what they wanted AMC to be.

III ASI
ENNONITE CONFERENCE
WAN

Members of a national champion children's jump rope team dash across the stage at Taiwan Night of Asia Mennonite Conference.

Consensus (the traditional Asian way of making decisions) emerged that the AMC exists for fellowship, not for carrying out programs. The new Statement of Purpose calls for fellowship to happen through (a) sharing of information in a twice-yearly newssheet, (b) exchange visits between conference pastors and lay people, nationally and internationally, (c) work camps for youth, (d) broader inspirational meetings every five or six years.

The decision not to become a program agency marks a change from the original AMC concept, veterans of previous meetings noted. In the early years AMC even sponsored a mission outreach in Bangladesh. The Taipei sessions were the third such international conference; the first two took place in 1971 at Dhamtari, India, and in 1980 at Osaka, Japan.

Family life position

The General Conference Mennonite Church Commission on Education is accepting applications for a qualified person/couple to work in the areas of

- family life education
- Mennonite Marriage Encounter
- parenting concerns
- intergenerational education.

Available **Aug. 1**

For more information or to apply contact:
Executive Secretary
Commission on Education
Box 347
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-5100.

Pastor needed

Deer Creek Mennonite Church seeks the services of a pastor beginning **Aug. 1**.

Contact:
Carl Hohmann
Deer Creek, OK 74636
(405) 267-3288.

Pastor needed

Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, a congregation of 500 members, is seeking a full-time pastor leader. The position is vacant effective Aug. 1, but the starting date is negotiable.

Applicants should be theologically qualified, experienced, willing to work in a team ministry and able to communicate with members in both English and German.

Send application to or request information package from:
Chairman, Pastoral Search Committee
926 Garfield St.
Winnipeg, MB R3E 2N6.

Pastor needed

Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, is seeking a pastor commencing in September or as soon as possible thereafter.

Both male and female candidates will be considered. This could also be a shared position.

For further information or to apply contact:
Allan J. Klassen
Chairman, Search Committee
909 East Centre
Saskatoon, SK S7J 2Z9
(306) 373-2260.

Associate pastor needed

Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Church is seeking a full-time associate pastor. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry, assisting with pulpit duties and ability to work with church music.

For information or application contact:
Vern Lobe, congregational chairman
Box 583
Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0
(306) 232-4930.

Amnesty International would like more religious people to become involved. Formed in the 1960s, AI works for the release of prisoners of conscience, people imprisoned for their political or religious beliefs, who have neither advocated nor taken part in violence. AI's literature refers to Pentecostal conscientious objectors in the Soviet Union, Catholic church workers in Latin America, Evangelical leaders in Ethiopia, Buddhist monks in Vietnam, Baha'is in Iran, and others. AI also has literature about the theological basis of human rights.

The fifth biennial Congress on Urban Ministry, held April 8-11 in Chicago, attracted 768 registrants from over 30 denominations and from a broad geographical spectrum of North America. This year's congress drew a record 65 Mennonites from as far away as Winnipeg, Denver and Virginia. Nine plenary speakers and 105 case study, seminar and workshop leaders brought a variety of perspectives to the theme, "Spirituality and Social Justice: an Essential Relationship for Urban Ministry."

The first of three teacher's manuals called *Prepare for Peace*, written by Ruth Obold, Inman, Kan., will be ready for distribution in time for General Conference triennial sessions at Saskatoon July 21-27. *Prepare for Peace* is a cooperative publication of Faith and Life Press and Mennonite Publishing House and can be ordered from either publisher for $7.95 (U.S.).

The Taipei delegates approved structures for an international steering committee for AMC and for a four-member executive committee.

In other business, the assembly endorsed the idea of sending a letter—to be signed by participants as individuals—expressing concerns on nuclear power to governments and other appropriate entities of all the nations using that source of energy (see box).

A majority of conference participants signed the letter. Among the Asian nations represented at AMC, nuclear power plants are in service in India, Japan and Taiwan. A Japanese delegate, Yorifumi Yaguchi, found irony in the fact that his nation, the only one to experience atomic attack, is now the third-ranking nuclear power in the world.

In his keynote address, Yanada focused on the overall conference theme, "Christian Discipleship in Asia Today." Said Yanada, "The Asia in which we are called is a vast continent. Its population is 2 billion, which makes up almost half the world's people."

"Asia has a future," he added. "Through modernization and industrialization people are becoming better off. But not all people are receiving the benefit. . . . Powerless people are struggling for their 'daily rice.' "

Yanada asserted that discipleship includes liberating people both from sin and from sinful structures: "By his death on the cross and resurrection, Jesus Christ has broken down the bondage of sin and death, giving eternal life to those who come to him, but faith in Jesus Christ is not merely saying, 'Lord Jesus, I believe you.' To believe is to trust and obey. To believe Jesus Christ is to follow him as his disciples."

More than 300 people turned out for the Saturday evening "Taiwan Night" celebration. Performing were groups and individuals ranging from the Taiwan Women's Choir to a national champion children's acrobatic ensemble, from a bamboo flutist to a Taipei Symphony Orchestra string ensemble, from a contemporary Christian youth band to the finale by the Taipei Union Choir.

Again the crowd surpassed 300 for the closing communion service Sunday morning, featuring a sermon by Mennonite World Conference executive secretary Paul Kraybill.

Reflecting on the meetings afterward, outgoing president Hiroshi Yanada said he felt the Asia Mennonite Conference had gained a sense of direction in the days at Taipei: "Our purpose has been unclear. Asia is so diverse—many different languages, many different types of people. We had ambiguity. Now we've worked out new guidelines. We're committed to a fellowship rather than organization."
David Shelly

Text of letter of concern on nuclear power

Following is the text of a letter on nuclear power prepared at the III Asia Mennonite Conference May 14-18 at Taipei, Taiwan. The letter will be sent to governments and other appropriate agencies in all nations with nuclear power plants.

We, participants of the Third Asia Mennonite Conference, meeting on May 14-18, 1986, in Taipei, submit to you this letter of concern regarding nuclear power production and radioactive waste.

Despite warnings by scientists and many concerned leaders of the world, accidents at nuclear power plants involving serious pollution are continuing, such as at Three Mile Island (USA) and Chernobyl (USSR). Power plants emit radiation into the environment and produce vast amounts of nuclear waste. These nuclear wastes are the most dangerous things humankind has ever possessed. They must be isolated, sealed, and watched for an extremely long time—longer than all of recorded human history. Our descendants will be left with this dangerous burden.

We have considered how irresponsible gigantic technology is, and how some day the whole earth may be polluted beyond repair, seriously affecting humankind and all living things. In light of this, we as Christians, regardless of our nationality, politics or standpoints, feel compelled to speak out against nuclear power production.

We wonder if prosperity built upon the foundations of environmental pollution and the sacrifice of our descendants is really progress. Therefore we strongly urge you to act courageously by changing your policy of dependence on nuclear energy.

"Wings,"
written and directed by Vickie Dyck,
premiers at Saskatoon '86.
A historical play of four women and
their Anabaptist faith

July 22, 24, 25 at 9:30 p.m.
(after the conclusion of the evening sessions)

Persephone Theatre
2802 Rusholme Road

Adults	$6
Youth (18 and under)	$4

Tickets available at registration

Busing has been arranged from the fieldhouse to the theater and is included in the ticket price.

Women in Mission, the 10,000-member organization within the General Conference Mennonite Church, will report for the first time to the plenary triennial sessions of that conference this coming July. Revised scheduling has Women in Mission reporting on Tuesday, July 22, at 9 a.m. (instead of the previously announced Saturday time).

Grace Mennonite Church, Brandon, Man., held an Easter Sunday sunrise service March 30. The service included several Easter songs by the choir plus a reading and skit portraying the disciples dilemma as they wrestled with the events of Good Friday. John Neufeld, president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, led the congregation in five sessions on 1 Corinthians 7 in March.

"It is when we encourage each other and build each other up that we come closest to doing the work of the Holy Spirit," said Ted Goosen in his closing address at the Mennonite Collegiate Institute Youth Orbit, held April 11-13 at the school in Gretna, Man. Goosen gave a series of presentations on the theme "Walking in the Light: Christian Communications." He encouraged the nearly 100 current and prospective MCI students to relate positively and responsibly with parents and friends, and noted that God uses various authority figures and friends to help shape us.

Twenty-five churches plan to join conference in July

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Twenty-five congregations have applied for new membership in the General Conference Mennonite Church.

These six have been added to the 19 described in the May 27 issue:

Fort Worth (Texas) Mennonite Church is a dual-conference congregation. Already a member of the South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church, it plans to join the Western District Conference in October. The membership is 16, and attendance is about 25.

First Mennonite Church, Kelowna, B.C., was formally organized in 1947. In 1951 a building was erected. In 1959-61 half the congregation established Kelowna Gospel Fellowship Church. Because a high percentage of the community is elderly and many tourists are in the area during the summer, the congregation focuses its programs on these areas. The membership is 65.

The Mennonite Church Community of Faith/Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Fe, Chicago, is the first General Conference Hispanic church in the Central District Conference, of which it is a member. It began in September 1983 under the leadership of pastor Marco Guete. Since September 1984 membership has grown from eight to 30, and attendance is 45-50.

Peace Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, held its first worship service Sept. 8, 1985, after about 10 families had been meeting for several months. The charter service was held Feb. 23, when 16 people became members. On Feb. 27 the congregation joined the Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan. The attendance is 25-30.

Santa Clara (Calif.) Mennonite Church is an outgrowth of Santa Clara Ethnic Chinese Mennonite Church. Adam Liu pastors both churches but uses a translator at the newer church, where Cambodian is spoken. Mei-Li Warmkessel serves as associate pastor. She was licenced March 9. The birthing service for the congregation was held Jan. 6, 1985. The church joined the Pacific District Conference last year. Its membership is 17, and attendance is about 45.

Taber (Alta.) Mennonite Church began as a mission outreach of the Coaldale Mennonite Church in the late 1940s. In 1951 the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta took over the work and placed a resident worker there. In 1963 the congregation formally organized and joined the Alberta conference in 1964. In 1969 it joined the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. The pastor is Elwin Epp. The membership is 60.

Nominee additions . . .

The following nominees were not included in the June 10 issue because of information arriving too late. Brenda Braun is nominated for secretary of General Conference, Frances Sommer for U.S. vice president of Women in Mission.

Brenda Braun, children's outreach worker at St. Andrews United Church, Toronto; member/ministerial assistant and secretary, Toronto United Mennonite Church; secretary for *The Mennonite*, 1976-77; Canadian Mennonite Bible College bookstore manager, 1977-79; coordinator, CMC resource center, 1979-80. Vision: "As secretary to know more of the General Conference family and to play a part in the planning and implementation of the conference programs and philosophies."

Frances Sommer is a member of Grace Mennonite Church in Pandora, Ohio. She is a Sunday school teacher and served as vice president and president of Central District Women in Mission. She is a retired schoolteacher. She has been involved in various kinds of voluntary service.

MINISTERS

David Block, pastor at Congerville (Ill.) Church, will retire in Newton, Kan., in August.

Ron Friesen began as pastor at Northwest Phoenix (Ariz.) Church this month.

Preston Goering, a May graduate from Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., will begin as pastor at Beatrice (Neb.) Church in July.

Joseph Heukensfeld will begin as pastor at Tull's Hill Bible Church (formerly Napier Mennonite Church), Bedford, Pa., in July.

Ray and *Brenda Martin Hurst*, May graduates from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., will begin as co-pastors at Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., in August.

Wilbur Nachtigal is the interim pastor at Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill.

WORKERS

Roland P Brown, medical director of Mennonite Christian Hospital, Hualien, Taiwan, and for 20 years administrator, has completed a 32-year medical career in Taiwan. Roland and

Morton Thiokol, the largest salt company in the world, makes rocket motors and solid fuel for the Midgetman, Minuteman, MX, Poseidon and Trident nuclear missiles, according to Nuclear Free America, which is calling for a boycott of Morton Salt and other Morton products. Almost half of Morton's $1.8 billion revenue in 1985 came from the Pentagon. Its defense contracts were up 84 percent despite a criminal investigation for defrauding the government. To protest write Morton chairman Charles Locke, 110 N. Wacker, Chicago, IL 60606.

RECORD

Brown

Wen-Yang

his wife, Sohie, have been Commission on Overseas Mission workers. He is being succeeded by *Wu Wen-Yang*, senior staff internist and chief of the cardiology section and outpatient department of the 204-bed hospital.

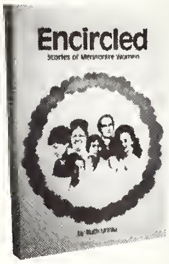
Dan and *Rose Waltner Graber*, COM church planters in Recife, Brazil, since 1982, returned to Indiana this month for North America Assignment. They, with their two children, Benjamin and Crystal, will make their home in Elkhart, Ind., where Dan plans to study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

Peter Voran will become the assistant overseas personnel secretary for COM Aug. 11. Bruno Bergen, personnel secretary, will continue to carry some administrative duties while studying at AMBS during the 1986-87 academic year. Voran will carry the Newton office administrative work until Bergen returns in June 1987. He and his wife, Lois, have served as COM workers in Japan during 1951-71 and 1978-86.

Henry J. and *Susan G. Gerbrandt* have returned to Winnipeg after completing a four-and-a-half-month special COM assignment at the Burwalde congregation, 30 miles north of Cuauhtemoc, Mexico.

Commission On Education

As for us, we have this large crowd of witnesses around us.
Hebrews 12:1a (TEV)



Encircled: Stories of Mennonite Women, by Ruth Unrau, is a collection of thirty-three stories of Mennonite women from the United States, Canada, The Netherlands, Germany, Russia, India, and Paraguay, who lived during the last two hundred years. These women, and many more, are a significant portion of the "large crowd of witnesses" that have encircled us.

Women whose stories are told include:

Honora Elizabeth Becker
Christena Harder Duerksen
Anna Enns Epp
Katharina Ratzlaff Epp
Florence White Fluck
Amanda Dahlenburg Friesen
Clara Louise Strubhar Gundy
Martha Lena Baumgartner Habegger
Sara Kathryn Kreider
Ruth Krehbiel Jacobs
Anna Wiebe Jantzen
Frieda Marie Kaufman
Stella Rosella Shoemaker Kreider
Wilhelmina Kuyf
Verena Sprunger Lehman
Elva Agnes Krehbiel Leisy
M'Della Moon
Emelie Siemens Hamm Mosiman
Sylvia Tschantz Pannabecker
Bertha Elise Kinsinger Petter
Polingaysi Qoyawayma (Elizabeth Q. White)
Pauline Krehbiel Raid
Margarethe Willms Rempel
Emma Mary Ruth
Susanna Thersa Nickel Schroeder
Julia Yellow Horse Shoulderblade
Hillegonda Cornelia van der Smissen
Mary Jane Stauffer Ebersole Smucker
Magdalena Neuenschwander Sprunger
Margreet Stubbe
Caroline Banwar Theodore
Lena Waltner
Katherine Kroeker Wiens

Encircled is available at Faith and Life Bookstores, Provident Bookstores, other fine bookstores, and Faith and Life Press.

$9.95 U.S.	$13.95 CANADA until July 31, 1986
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Encircled has been published by Faith and Life Press which is the publisher for the General Conference and is operated by the Commission on Education. To order *Encircled* or other Faith and Life Press publications, contact Faith and Life Press at the address below or Faith and Life Press—Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3P 0M4, Phone (204) 888-6781.

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Don't alter texts

There seems to be movement in our churches to eliminate "sexist" language from our hymns, readings and Bible passages.

It cannot be denied that women have been discriminated against in the past, and that is wrong; but to alter established texts is also wrong.

The author of a published text, even though copyright restrictions may no longer apply, deserves respect and admiration for her or his creative endeavor, and to tamper with this material violates the integrity of the original creative act. If I were to publish a hymn or an anthem, I certainly would not appreciate future generations tampering with text or music to satisfy some current social injustice.

The answer to the problem is for church leaders, poets and musicians to be sensitive to the issue and create new forms for the future that reflect these concerns. The problem cries out for a creative response, not a reactionary censoring of older texts—as if changing the words of the past would somehow make things right for the present.

In the meantime, I shall continue to pray, "Our Father, who art in heaven. . . ." *James W. Bixel, 10600 Bixel Road, Route 2, Bluffton, OH 45817*

May 12

AIDS and sin

D. M. Duffy is identified as a law graduate (April 22 issue). The sad thing about our adversarial system of law is that lawyers are often more concerned about winning their cases than they are of discovering the truth of the matter. So they will resort to all kinds of devices, like special pleading in this article on AIDS, which tries to convince the reader on the basis of misleading evidence.

For example, we are told, "In the Bible, sickness is not equated with punishment." You cannot prove the truth of a universal proposition by one example, as he tries to do. Some sickness in the Bible is not equated with punishment. It is more of an exception to the general view that disease is a punishment for transgression (Exodus 4:11, Deuteronomy 32:39, Micah 6:13). In Numbers 12:10 we have the particular case of Miriam being struck with leprosy. In the New Testament we have the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) and of Herod eaten by worms (Acts 12:23). In Mark 2:5 Jesus heals the paralytic by forgiving his sins.

The author's example of John 9:1 also proves the falsity of the universal proposition. Ophthalmia neonatorum was often found in newborn infants as a result of venereal infection, a disease also spread as the result of sexual sin, which in this incident of blindness is ruled out as a cause of blindness.

The question then is, How do we show the right kind of compassion and give the right kind of help to the sinners and their innocent victims of the disease? A fear of the disease has caused some promiscuous homosexuals and bisexuals to change their lifestyle. It can be a relatively helpful motivation to which the fear of God could rightfully be added. But theologically the motivation must be grounded in Jesus' redemptive love and must include the call to repentance.

Society must also take measures to protect the innocent as, for example, blood-donor clinics are trying to do. But innocent victims of the sin are not guilty, even as the victim of murder is not guilty unless he provoked the deed (Matthew 5:10ff). *David Janzen, Box 594, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0*

May 12

A different miracle

Three cheers to the Rempel family and congratulations to Jeremy ("Head Injury Is a Family Affair," April 22 issue). It is an article that undoubtedly will be used and passed on to other distraught parents in the intensive care unit as they begin to cope with the news of a brain-damaged child. We've been there too.

Our success story is of the kind usually not printed for the public to read. It turned out different. We would title it, "We Believe in Miracles."

On Aug. 6, 1985, our 16-year-old son, Mike, was involved in a bike-truck collision on a four-lane crossing intersection—a four-lane highway (80 km zone) with a large mall and all its attractions on one side and the swimming pool, park and bike path on the other. There are no lights or pedestrian facilities at this popular intersection.

The prognosis of his injury—after life-support helps, after the sophisticated EEGs and CAT scans, etc. was irreversible, massive brain damage—no surgery or any other medical help could change that for Mike.

Head injury is a family affair—oh, yes! Within minutes, family members and friends poured into that small waiting room. For the next weeks and months over a thousand people were in and out of Mike's room. We prayed for the miracle we all were waiting for. We watched our healthy, strong, lively teenager reduced to a completely bedridden, helpless individual, a "vegetable," as some referred to his condition. We prayed, we watched, we waited, we agonized.

On Dec. 6, 1985, exactly four months to the day of the accident, the miracle happened . . . the miracle of miracles. The phone rang, and the nurse said, "He slipped away peacefully; it's all over." I felt like screaming, "Oh no, it's not all over, his life is only now beginning." At 6:05 p.m. Mike mounted up with wings and returned to his Maker for all eternity. He was healed forever. *Linda Enns, Box 3776, Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0*

May 13

A dissenting voice on Expo

On May 2, Expo '86, the spectacular world's fair in Vancouver, opened its gates. British Columbia anticipated tourists coming to visit in the millions. Among those coming to Expo are Mennonites.

I am deeply concerned that Mennonites have supported Expo '86 so uncritically. When I read the Bible, the standard for judging if a king/government is doing a good job is this: Does the king/government support and care for the widow, orphan and alien; does the king/government uphold justice? If yes, then the king is being true to the responsibilities of office. If no, then the king's right to rule is not valid.

The seed capital for Expo '86 has come from education, from welfare, from the poor and needy and elderly in our land. Those with the smallest voice in society are carrying the greatest burden because the king/government refuses to uphold their cause.

I expect many Mennonites will come to visit Expo '86. I expect many will see the glossy Pavilion of Promise, an "evangelical outreach" for 100 Huntley Street. If you have the time, visit the area under the Georgia Street Viaduct. You may find Christ there, among the poor, the lame, the elderly poor.

Because of my faith, I intend to take

LETTERS

James 1:27 seriously. You won't see me at Expo. *Walter Bergen, 405-31955 Old Yale Road, Clearbrook, BC V2T 4N1*
May 16

Be careful about Sunday

I have not yet read all of the articles in the May 13 issue. Some articles I've read and I agree with.

I do not agree with "Sunday Inconvenience Could be Good."

A person must remember that the Sabbath and Sunday are entirely two different days. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week—Saturday. Sunday is the first day of the week. We have not the right which day we will keep holy; that is God's right by right of creation and by command.

Perhaps someone will be brave enough to write and research this subject. I'd like to see a more studied article on this matter. *Dorothy Rasmussen, 8511-18 Ave. N.W., Seattle, WA 98117*
May 17

I am in prison

I am a prisoner in Kansas State Penitentiary, Lansing, and have been given several copies of *The Mennonite* by a fellow Mennonite and prisoner.

I've been reading them and really enjoy most of what I've read, then I pass them on through a rack up at the church doors. Why isn't there a subscription section in your magazine?

I have lived with a Mennonite family in Abbyville, Kan.—the Samuel D. Nisly family. He is the best friend I've ever had, an exceptionally good boss and a forgiving man.

I never knew about such beautiful people until I met Sam on a construction job and started getting to know him and others like him. I am seriously thinking about joining one of the Mennonite churches in the Hutchinson (Kan.) area. I plan to talk in depth about this to Amos Nisly (an elder) in 1988, when, hopefully, I will be out on parole.

The reason I write is to ask if there is any way I might start receiving a subscription to *The Mennonite*? I do not have any money, and when I can earn any, it's not much. I will understand if I can't receive my request.

I just had to write because I know that the Mennonites I know stand for complete truth and are Bible followers. I see very little stress and lack of Christian love in the Mennonites I've been around and want to become more like this. Keep up the Lord's way. *Steve(n) E. McKelvy, #34885, KSP, Box 2, Lansing, KS 66043*
May 23

Editor's note to all readers: *We get this kind of request regularly and can hardly turn it down. It is faith in our other readers that makes us do this.*

At this time we have about 100 people getting The Mennonite *due to special requests. They go to Cuba, India, Korea, Japan and elsewhere.*

Any gifts you could give to this cause will help us to continue responding positively to such requests. Thanks for your help.

Editorial disappointing

I am disappointed with Mark Winslow's editorial, "Healing for Modern-Day Lepers" (May 13 issue). It perpetuates the "ignorance, fear, self-righteousness and neglect in regard to homosexuals" of which Mark says the church has been a victim.

It begins with the title and continues with unsupported statements from the inspired Scriptures and 3,000 years of traditional moral wisdom. It is not until this century that one word in the texts (1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10) is claimed to refer to homosexuality. It was the tradition of the church that the word referred to masturbation. The other word in the texts was believed to refer to male prostitutes.

Romans 1:26-27 condemns the homosexual acts of heterosexuals. These people are not homosexual as we understand the term today.

To say that "there are psychological and relational needs that drive men and women into homosexual activity" may be true of prison populations but says nothing to an understanding of homosexuality as the result of biological causes (refer to *Science* 225: 1496-1498; "Homosexuality: Nature vs. Nurture," Judd Marmor, M.D., Harvard Medical School Mental Health Letter, October 1985). If one is born this way, one may not speak of choice or sin.

The Bible is clear that sin has to do with rebellion against the Creator and idolatry. Each of us must determine if our sex lives come under that judgment.

I commend the offering of ministries of healing to anyone. But I have a problem with attacks on the sincerity of other Christians ("a vocal minority of Mennonites . . . guilty of imposing the 20th-century ideology of the Gay Liberation Movement upon the Bible by adopting a liberal biblical interpretation") and insisting that one's own interpretation is the true "evangelical Anabaptist Christian" position. *Donald R. Steelberg, 655 S. Lorraine Ave., Wichita, KS 67211*
May 23

Challenges editorial

It was saddening and discouraging to see the editorial "Healing for Modern-Day Lepers" (May 13 issue). It is this mentality that perpetuates the "leper" status of homosexually oriented people. Mark correctly acknowledges that the church needs to repent for its ignorance, fear, self-righteousness and neglect in regard to homosexuals, but then what immediately follows makes that claim of repentance seem empty.

If Mark's belief is that homosexual behavior is always sin and that it is a lie of Satan that homosexual people cannot change, so be it. However, it is incorrect to present these assertions as undisputable Christian truths. One must also wonder about the helpfulness of casting those who differ as lacking biblical faithfulness, as guilty of imposing ideology of the Gay Liberation Movement or as violating sound biblical principles.

There are many homosexual people who have sought God's help in changing their orientation only to discover that such change did not occur. These people, in giving themselves totally over to God, feel that God's will for them is to live a life of service and love to God and others within the context of their given sexual orientation. Some may be called to celibacy, others are called to live in the context of a loving, caring relationship—just as are heterosexuals.

What then would Mark propose for homosexually oriented Mennonites who understand the biblical passages and God's will for their lives differently than he does?

I feel as though Christ would that we *not* attempt to discredit each other by casting aspersions when we disagree, but rather that we commit ourselves to the task of seeking the truth together in love. *Jim Derstine, 1325 15th St. N.W., #908, Washington, DC 20005*
May 23

A 92-year-old challenges the churches

R. L. Hartzler

This point in life to which I have come is oft referred to as the "golden years." For many, no doubt, that is true. But many find it necessary to extract that gilding substance out of the past more than the present.

Sometimes people say, "How does it feel to be 92?" If I wanted to be cryptic I'd say, "Very much the same as being 91."

There are three elements in it really. *One is gratitude.* One cannot be other than grateful for God's overshadowing caring and blessing . . . enjoying good health through the years, now looking back and seeing the friends that have come, the friends we've made.

There is awe. I am in the seventh generation of the Hartzler line in this country. In our time there was one head of family who lived to be 88. My grandfather Hartzler never lived to see his 60th birthday. So since July 1, 1982, I have been traveling, I guess we'd say, "in virgin time."

There is also aloneness. I look over pictures of ministers from years past. I see only one left, and I recognize that person. I see lists of people from committees and boards in the four areas I had most to do with—the conference, the hospital, seminary and the Africa Mission Board—and only now and then I find the name of someone I know. And so I find myself going back to Whittier's observation in his poem "Snowbound." As he reminisced about the family circle of which only he and his brother were left, he said, "How strange it seems, with so much gone, of life and love, to still live on."

I feel the various interests with which I was related were much involved in trying to keep up with the call for such services.

But now, at this point in time, I see an era in which the church must come to grips with many things concerning itself. We have many rapidly shifting situations in our nation and in the world. One of the most serious surplus problems we have in the United States today is not corn or beans—it's people. There are too many of us living too long.

The forces that seek to waylay people along the way are becoming bolder and more relentless than ever before. There are four things to which the church needs to give diligent consideration as time goes on.

One is the matter of balancing outreach and inculcation. Jesus, when he closed his great commission, said, "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you,"—not advised, not suggested, *commanded* you. For us as Mennonites this means also to ingrain people with Jesus' formula for dealing with enemies as it relates to military participation. I know of no item in the whole range of Christian doctrine that's as hard for the church body to promulgate and increase in than that. The whole pressure of our time is the other way.

Another thing is to save people who fall below the standard and to save the standard at the same time. We have some people who remember a time when a kind of discipline was in vogue. That seems harsh to us now, but how do we save the standard and save the people? When the church helps someone who has been hurt, let it be understood clearly that that's reaching out in a Christlike spirit to help that person, not lowering the standard.

Another is this gradual adjustment or accommodation to the subtle changes that come along. First we are appalled. Later we endure it in a sort of accommodation, and finally as a church we develop some de facto answers to the problem, without ever having wrestled them through spiritually.

And finally, leaders in the church, as new issues arise, must strive quickly and manfully to cope with those issues and come out with pronunciations to help people find their way.

A case in point is abortion. I had hoped that there would early be a top-level conference of our educators, sociologists, doctors and ministers to wrestle with this problem as it was coming on. We have as a nation two determined organizations. One says, "Fling the door wide open." The other says, "Slam it tightly shut." In between are borderline cases which call for clear discernment and decision. But now it's gotten into politics. It has no business being there.

Before the Civil War, some American Friends held slaves. But the church went to work on it on the basis of conscience, Christian brotherhood and justice. Their slaves were all freed before it became an issue in politics.

If I should come back 50 years from now and find doom had not happened, I'd be like an old man who said, "I've seen lots of troubles, most of them never happened." And I'm sure I'd be glad.

R. L. Hartzler, 807 N. Main St., Bloomington, IL 61701, was given a special plaque in recognition by the Central District Conference, April 4, 1986, at Washington, Ill., for his 70 years of service to churches and conferences since his ordination on April 2, 1916.

R. L. Hartzler receives the applause of the CDC body upon being recognized for 70 years of faithful service to the churches and conferences since his ordination on April 2, 1916. In the background are (from left) Mark Weidner, CDC conference minister, R. L.'s daughter, Donna, and her husband, Jim.

speaking out

Becoming a *new* General Conference

Robert L. Ramseyer

The word has been out for some time that Mennonites are now found around the world, come in all shapes, sizes and colors, speak many languages and eat a wide variety of foods. But most of us also know what a *typical* General Conference Mennonite is supposed to look like: grandparents were GC Mennonites, speaks English and/or German, ancestors from the Netherlands, Germany or Switzerland.

At Saskatoon we are going to talk about changing—about becoming a conference that truly welcomes people of all cultural traditions who share the faith on which the General Conference is founded. And that raises some hard questions.

1. *Do we really want to include other people?* I believe we do. The General Conference was founded on a concern for mission, and we do want to share the Good News with others.

2. *What will it cost?* This is the tough one. It will mean giving up some things that GC Mennonites value highly. It will mean many changes in ways of thinking and working, particularly on the part of typical General Conference Mennonites. Being open to new people means giving up the idea that the old members set the pattern for our life together. It means not just believing with the head but feeling from the heart that a person named Chiang or Bear is in every way as authentic a GC Mennonite as is one named Klassen or Miller. It means we all listen to each other and learn from each other about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in the General Conference Mennonite Church. It will mean that our publications will be written and edited by people from all of our cultural traditions. It will mean that many of us who are used to thinking of ourselves as teachers will need to again become learners. It will mean that the typical GC will play the Mennonite Game just as eagerly with GC Mennonites whose ancestors came as slaves from Africa as with those whose ancestors came from Russia, even though the game may take longer.

Becoming a truly open conference which welcomes all those who share our faith will mean giving up the kind of relaxed homeliness which many have enjoyed until the present. It will mean trading that homeliness for the adventure of working together with many different cultural traditions, learning from our mistakes and misunderstandings and gaining a new vision of what it means to follow Jesus Christ today.

3. *Will bringing a lot of new people lead us away from the Anabaptist faith?* Not if we really share with each other. True, we know of churches that took in many new people and ended up as ordinary Protestant churches. But that happened because they were never treated as being potentially full-fledged genuine Mennonites—equally Mennonites with those who have always been Mennonites. The gospel shared with them was often a stripped-down gospel that was "all that could be expected of new Christians." In a truly open and sharing General Conference we will need to be constantly sharing with each other and confronting each other—constantly helping each other to be better disciples of Jesus Christ—sharing not a bare bones gospel but the richness and fullness of what it means to be a disciple in every area of life.

4. *Why should we do this?* Because this is what the gospel is all about. Because there is so much we can learn from each other. Because it can be a lot of fun. In Christ people who would not naturally be friends come together as one new people: the people of God. This is how people will know that we are disciples of Jesus Christ. This is what the *new* General Conference Mennonite Church will be.

At Saskatoon '86 we want to see how God's kingdom can come in fresh ways within the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Robert L. Ramseyer is director of the Mission Training Center, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

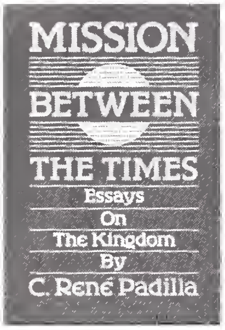
books

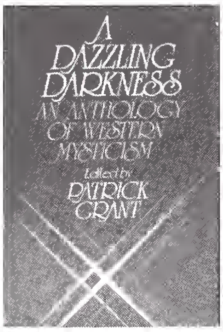
Discipleship and love

Mission Between the Times: Essays on the Kingdom *by C. Rene Padilla (Eerdmans, 1985, 199 pages)*

Reviewed by Glendon Klaassen, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for Latin America, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114

Mission Between the Times is a collection of essays by Padilla presented in various oral and written forms between 1974 (Lausanne) and 1984. They represent the author's participation in the international theological dialogue on missiological issues. Padilla, who lives in Argentina, is a keen observer as well as a participant in the concerns and perspectives of Latin American society. His hopes are that his contributions might be helpful to turn "the face of evangelicalism in the direction of a suffering world."





Padilla represents a handful of Latin American theologians/missiologists who are calling for an evangelical response to the issues faced by the Third World. Though Latin America is often referred to as a Christian continent, Christianity has not adequately taken responsibility for the world. The author sees salvation as total wholeness, humanization and life in the kingdom of God with its social and political dimensions as well as religious. With great courage he points to perspectives and practices in evangelism that distort the gospel of Christ.

Padilla's strong emphasis on discipleship and love, of a Christian ministry of wholeness centered in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ as Lord in the context of a local church makes this book special for all readers. Not only is this material helpful for cross-cultural mission, but it offers a basic theology with its applications in contemporary society.

The editors of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* named this book one of the top 15 books of 1985 for mission studies. I highly recommend studying it.

Shalom for youth

Militarism and Hope *by Alyson Huntly, Jim Morin and Marsha Sfeir (William C. Brawn Co., Religious Education Division, 1983)*

Reviewed by Gareth Neufeld, Landmark, Man.

Militarism and Hope is one unit of a five-unit high school curriculum series entitled "People Living for Justice." While its primary target group is senior high students in religious education courses, the program can also be adapted to secular public school social studies contexts, as well as youth and adult Sunday school situations.

The book consists of 17 study sessions, some of which require two or three 40-minute periods to complete. The entire book requires about 28 periods to finish, depending on how the teacher approaches the various lessons.

The five-book series opens with an extremely helpful introduction that explains the authors' assumptions, the use of inclusive language, the role of student and teacher evaluation and the objectives of the series. The authors seek to empower the students to move beyond inaction, assuming that "learning will only take place if it connects with the experiences and questions of the learner" and that "one must act on what has been learned in order to integrate it into one's life and so that the learning process can continue." For this reason, the authors nudge both student and teacher on to the "integrating and implementing" process.

Particularly important for a high school group is that the authors have combined a hard-hitting challenge to the growing militarization of our society with a clear statement of the hope "which we believe is at the very centre of our faith as Christians." They call for the development of a theology of hope which is not based on naive optimism but on our Christian faith, an honest understanding of present global realities and a knowledge of the actions of prophetic people confronting global military growth. Biblical perspectives on peacemaking, explanations of the global situation and the testimony of people responding to these realities are what make up most of the study units.

It seems clear that these three writers have captured a truly biblical sense of peacemaking—shalom—which is not singularly preoccupied with bombs and missiles but which seeks to restore God's creation to a status which God intended it to enjoy.

Mysticism excerpts

A Dazzling Darkness: An Anthology of Western Mysticism, *edited by Patrick Grant (Eerdmans, 1985, 366 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, assistant editor

"Mysticism," writes Patrick Grant in the Introduction to this book, "is an experience of God's presence beyond the boundaries of culture and language, which the mystic nonetheless undertakes to communicate for humanity at large." He has arranged more than 900 brief excerpts from the works of nearly 90 Western mystics under seven topics: Creation and Fall, The Human Estate, Preliminary Patterns, The Redemption of Psyche, Prayer, Personal Progress and The Directions of Culture.

Grant writes that he "tried to choose excerpts striking in a literary way, whether as metaphor, or as a pithy saying, or as compact wisdom, contributing to a vision of the world characterized by a creatively humanizing and redeeming energy."

A Dazzling Darkness serves as an excellent resource for quotations on a variety of spiritual topics or as an introduction to Western mysticism. For more in-depth knowledge, however, one should read the works of the mystics themselves.

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MEDITATION

A stained vessel

At breakfast that morning bacon and eggs had been on our menu. As I washed the dishes I noticed that on the underside of the electric fry pan several patches of accumulated grease had not been removed in previous washings.

I dug out a scouring pad and in a frenzy of cleaning worked hard to remove as much as I could. Right around the legs of the fry pan the task was more difficult. Since I had carelessly allowed it to accumulate, now the problem was compounded by having been repeatedly heated.

As I worked vigorously to remove the offending stain, I thought how much like that stain is sin in our lives.

At first there is a small sin which doesn't seem to matter and which we tend to overlook. It gets a toehold because of our failure to listen to the promptings of that inner voice from God.

Slowly that stain hardens, becomes larger and uglier. Finally even we can see that something has to be done. Then it takes more than soapy water. Real elbow grease needs to be applied—also continued diligence and discipline on our part to hear the promptings of the Holy Spirit—to break our sin pattern.

God hears our prayers of confession and once again makes our vessel bright and shining.

Helen Friesen

What for?

". . . and his voice was like the sound of many waters" (Revelation 1:15).

I sit on my big rock here on this even bigger rock of a mountain and ponder its tumbling stream at my feet: What for *me*?

Only my Master: God.

I hear him. His voice is as the sound of many waters.

How humbling it is to think of it.

For even this little babble has a sound as significant as all of my outdoors. It fills my expanding mind with the one sound of its impatient yet unrelenting rushing.

Suddenly I am caught up in an atomic realization. If this busy little trickle of water seemingly fills all of my person, could I ever take in, totally absorb, God's voice of many waters? Oh, it would be as a million rivers.

Me? Take it in? Never.

My heart seems overcome to think it . . . his being that mighty . . . even his voice.

His greatness overwhelms my person, and I am brought to humility, to a small thought: "I could never attempt all of you, God. I won't even try. It is enough to know that your love for me is as big as the sound of you; no matter how small I seem."

I am content with the world, with my place in it. I love this my mountain, my special stream.

"But thank you for this little space out of time . . .

For my brief, expanded vision of you.

I hear your voice in the brook; I am blessed.

Now let me worship you with love larger than I, here on my mountain rock.

With my little stream . . .

And your voice."

Gail Lake Richardson

CONTENTS

D. H. Lawrence writes that pornography is "doing dirt on sex." Some say it was predictable that our sex-saturated society would turn to perverted abuses of our sexuality. That is happening in the porno industry.

What no one had predicted is the influence, the pervasiveness, the power and the utter destructive nature of this industry.

If we care about children and women—yes, also men—especially those in unfortunate circumstances of poverty and other social handicaps, we must act. Christians must affirm the beauty of God's creation in our whole being. That is a significant response to the servers of smut that are running loose and wild among us.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Pornography, violence and lust

Concern about pornography has come center stage. With adult bookstores outnumbering McDonald's golden arches in Canada and the United States, pornography is big business.

Porn today thrives on movies, videos, magazines and other products focusing on "group sex, oral sex, anal sex, gay and lesbian sex, sex with pregnant women, sex with crippled women, bestiality, incest and masochism" (*Christianity Today*, March 7, 1986, p. 17).

Increasing evidence shows such sexual perversion eventually leads to violence. In most cases the violence happens to women and children.

So the campaigns are being mounted to fight pornography. In the United States there have been four organizations—Citizens for Decency through Law, Morality in Media, National Federation for Decency and National Christian Association. In 1983 they joined together in the National Coalition Against Pornography, led by a Presbyterian pastor, Jerry Kirk. Kirk's book *The Mind Polluters* is one of the better-known resources.

In 1986 the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church urged our general secretary, Vern Preheim, to participate in a national lobby for "responsible television." The inter-Mennonite Council on International Ministries wrote all Mennonite editors urging us to respond to this problem.

I have been slow to respond. My conviction and feelings say we are once again taking the *wrong approach.* Communities are busy passing obscenity laws, closing "smut" stores and porno theaters. Fines are levied against those who profit from this "business."

I support all of the above. But they are small ripples on the water.

The crux of this sin was touched years ago by then U.S. president Jimmy Carter. He had the courage to confess that even he, a professing evangelical Baptist, sometimes "lusted." That issue I rarely see mentioned in *all* the tirades against pornography and violence. Once again moral and spiritual leaders are pointing fingers "out there" at "them." Let's legislate morality and purity by controlling "them."

And there are reasons to build protective systems for innocent children and for women. In our patriarchal, macho system, men must accept major responsibility for the twin problems—pornography and violence.

But the solution is more likely to come with confession than with legislation. It is strange how easily Christians ignore Jesus on this topic. He said, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander . . . these are what defile . . ." (Matthew 15:19-20a). In holding up the Law, Jesus said, "You have heard . . . 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28).

Jesus had a gift for cutting down to the meat of issues. The true core of pornography and violence lies in *our* hearts and minds, *our lust*—not "out there." Who of us, especially men, has never looked lustfully? Who has confessed it (like President Carter did)?

We avoid facing our hangups over evil thinking, thievery (income tax evasion?), gossip, our sexuality, the undraped human body, by engaging in denunciation and acceptable social opposition to visible immorality.

That won't solve many problems. It will buy time for our personal struggles, and that can be positive. But if we don't deal with ourselves, our children and their children will continue to deal outwardly with issues that plague the insides of most people.

To begin to find answers, the first step is confession. The second is to recognize that in our sex-saturated world, we will lust unless we can deal openly, honestly and creatively with our total being. We are sexual, and sexuality relates to appreciation of our bodies and others' bodies as God's holy temple (1 Corinthians 3:16). There is a beauty here to be promoted without destroying some of its mystery. Lust leaves nothing for the imagination. Mystery (healthy romance) is creatively stimulating to the imagination.

Repentance for pornography and violence will best begin and be seen as people notice that Christians are enjoying their *total being together* in Christ.

Bernie Wiebe

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:13 JULY 8, 1986

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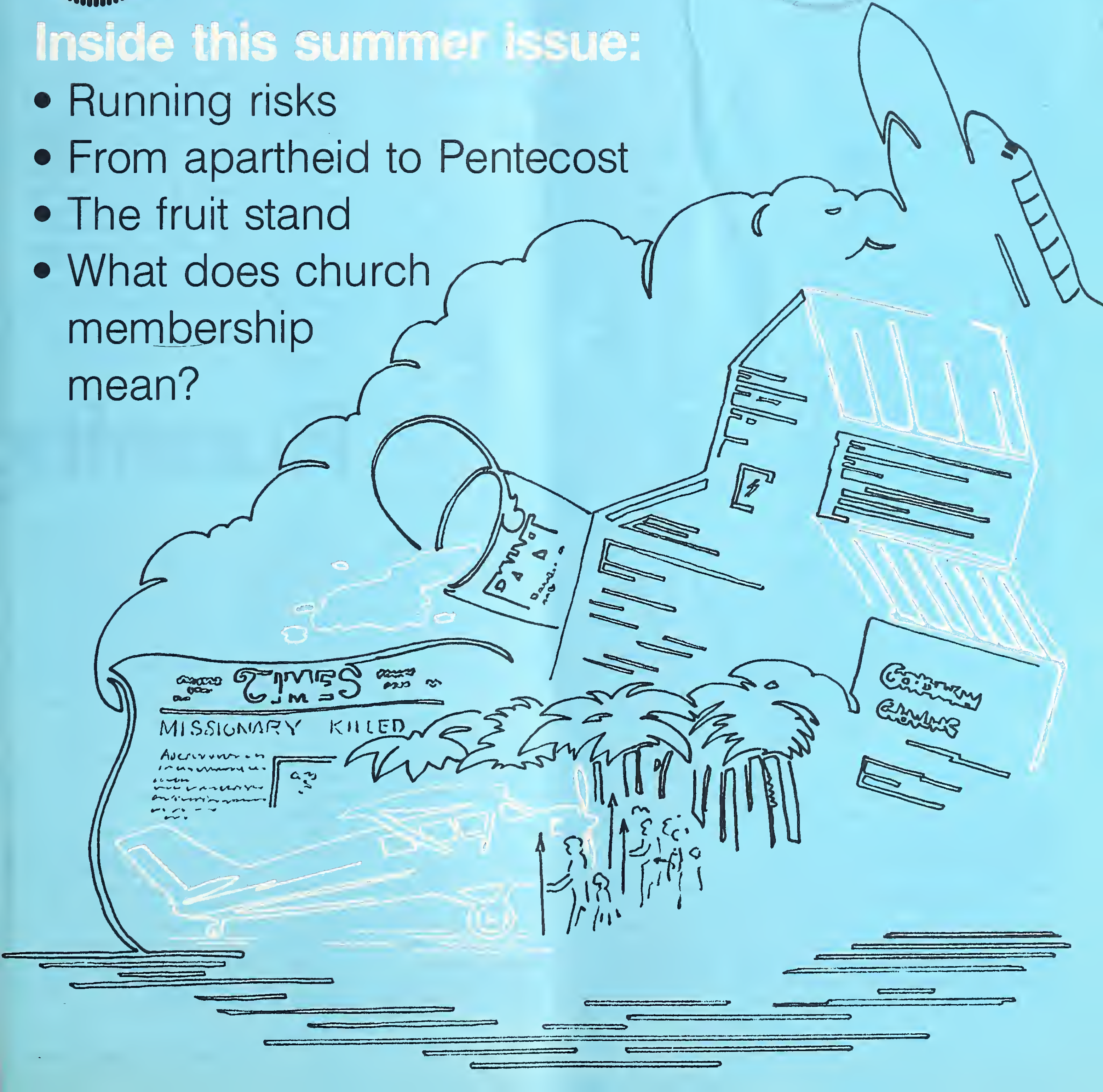
JUL 16 '86

2 WEEKS TO SASKATOON '86

Inside this summer issue:

- Running risks
- From apartheid to Pentecost
- The fruit stand
- What does church membership mean?



When I was younger and attending university, I found it difficult to earn enough money each summer to pay for my tuition and books. I was fortunate in my first year to meet a young medical student who spent his summers doing a notably non-medical job . . . painting grain elevators. It didn't take long for me to ask the necessary questions and eventually join the crew. I was impressed with the brushes that had to be maintained, the hundreds and hundreds of feet of rope that had to be prepared and the scaffolding that would hold us as we worked our way down from the tops of those buildings to the ground.

It was all rather exciting when we got to our first little town late one afternoon and prepared to limber up for the project by doing an annex roof before dark. It was my first time up on an elevator annex roof and, although I was a bit apprehensive, I was ready to go. Holding firmly to the safety rope and my paint pail, I stepped out onto the roof. Everything seemed OK except for the fine layer of grain dust that covered the shingles. I was unprepared for this and within the first few minutes I slipped and stumbled forward. I was terrified, for in the process I seemed to go blind. Everything in front of me went black and I began to slide slowly downwards.

The paint bucket I was holding had struck the roof first. As I stumbled to my knees, the paint had splashed over my face and glasses. I didn't slide far and soon regained my composure. I was able to clean up and continue, but I stayed near the top of the roof and contemplated what I had gotten myself into. Was I really going to be able to carry this off? Did I have the stomach for this kind of risky work?

The next few days were enlightening. I found out how things were done and soon I was up on the scaffolds with the best of them. The risks didn't diminish, but I was able to comprehend them more clearly and prepare myself to meet them. I spent three more years on that crew, and now I look back on that experience as an exciting and rewarding time. I would be poorer without it.

During those same years at university, I read of an individual named Jim Elliot, a student of languages eager to put his qualifications to work as a missionary translator among peoples whose language had never been heard, much less written. He became involved with the Wycliffe Bible Translators in a project to make contact with a small tribe of South American native peoples called the Aucas, who had never seen white men or any of the items of Western civilization. (You may know the story of his short life.) He and his group found the people they were looking for and, in a daring escapade, were able to land their light airplane on a stretch of sand along the jungle river where the Aucas lived. Meeting the people was an exciting event, and though tenuous, friendly relations seemed to be established. It was dangerous, but the group returned to that river a number of times. On one visit, Elliot, his companions and pilot were all killed, brutally murdered by the Aucas they had risked so much to meet.

Was it worth it? Was it worth the risk? In fact, was it risk? Or just foolishness? Risk is defined in terms of possibilities—the possibility of danger, the possibility of harm, the possibility of loss or the possibility of great gain. One has to know what is in store and weigh the possibilities that are there, then, with this knowledge, to forge ahead anyway. That is not foolishness, it is "running the risks." Being alive is a risk, driving to work is a risk, having friends is a risk, getting married is a risk, having children is a risk, believing or trusting is a risk.

We don't usually view these things as risks. We take them in stride, but occasionally we imagine some of the problems that lie ahead. Surely you have had the feeling of panic that makes your heart stop—or makes it race in fright. Surely you have been faced with a task that will be risky, and all you can summon up in your imagination are scenes of disaster—everything failing, everything ending in complete waste—equipment destroyed, friends lost, career ruined. But is it ever that bad? Do these scenes ever translate into reality? Very seldom. What usually happens is that we pick up our courage and proceed; we forge ahead anyway—often to a more exciting experience.

When Jesus told the story of the servants who were each given an amount of gold from their master (Matthew 25:14-30), I believe he was talking about risk. The story seems to be straightforward, but it has a number of interesting twists. The man going abroad put his capital into his servant's hands expecting it would not only be cared for but would be capitalized upon. They were to be managers of this money; they were not simply to secure it.

The talent mentioned in the parable was a large amount of money. Common units of currency in New Testament times were the mina, the shekel and the talent. It has been estimated that the talent equaled approximately 3,000-3,600 shekels (*New English Bible*, 1970). The weight and value of the shekel varied so much from district to district and through the centuries that it is almost impossible to equate it to modern currency. (Some earlier documents place the value of the talent at approximately $1,000.) However, recent evidence suggests that on average the shekel may have weighed about 11.5 grams. If this is accurate, a talent would have been a weight of gold 3,000 times the weight of the shekel, or approximately 34,500 grams. That's 34.5 kilograms of gold. If gold is priced at $300 per ounce, one talent would be equal to approximately $354,320!

To be given responsibility of this magnitude was risky business. It would require a full commitment to the request—an almost perfect concentration on the task. Two of the servants were later called "good" and "faithful" because they put that money to work. It must have been exciting and scary and even "panicky" at times. The point is that we *all* have been given responsibilities (as the parable says) equal to our abilities and are expected to put them to productive use. The story goes on to describe the time of accounting. The property owner returned from his journey and expected to see something new, to hear reports of exciting and creative ventures.

Runnin

Jesus was not concerned about the amount of money involved. He was suggesting that we be adventurous in our responsibilities. The third servant concerned himself solely with security. He dug a hole in the ground and hid the money there until his master returned. But look at his master's response: "You lazy rascal. . . ." And he flung him out into the dark. He was not interested in security at this point; what he wanted was adventure, some daring—risk. We don't know what would have happened if the money would have been lost or if there had been failure. But we do know that some kind of management was required.

Risk always includes the possibility of failure or loss, and these possibilities will have to be expected. (Jim Elliot and his companions surely understood this.) Occasional losses will have to be sustained. We may not always understand these, but they are the price of risk. (Imagine the risks Jesus himself took.) In the face of this, we have been given promises to match the commands given. The commands are not simple: "Give all you have . . . ," "cast out devils . . .," "heal the sick. . . ," "be ye perfect." Have you tried any one of these lately? They're risky. But he has promised supernatural powers for the task: "When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new act of creation," "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you," "I am with you always, to the end of time."

Jesus expects us to take the new life he has given us and risk it. He expects us to invest it in daring ways. He expects us to take charge, to be innovative and creative, to discover the ways that his new life can be shared with others.

C. S. Lewis suggested that one must count the cost. He says, ". . . (Our Lord) warned people to 'count the cost' before becoming Christians. 'Make no mistake,' Jesus says, 'if you let me, I will make you *perfect*. The moment you put yourself in my hands, that is what you are in for. Nothing less or other than that.' "

To sit back and do nothing is to be cast out into the dark. But to risk ourselves is to commit ourselves to living an adventure. I'm not suggesting that we all go out and paint grain elevators or visit primitive tribes. But I suggest that we assess the responsibilities that we have been given, then take them and invest them.

"The man who had been given the five bags of gold came and produced the five he had made: 'Master,' he said, 'you left five bags of gold with me; look, I have made five more.' 'Well done, my good and trusty servant,' said the master. . . ."

Risk what you have; come in and share the master's rejoicing.

"If we let him—and we can prevent him if we choose—he will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine; a bright, stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly his boundless power and delight and goodness. The process will be long and in parts painful, but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what he said."

Marv Gutwin, 61 Red River Road, Saskatoon, SK S7K 1G2, is a high school history teacher and a member of the Nutana Park Mennonite Church.

risks

Marv Gutwin

TIMES
MISSIONARY KILLED

From apartheid to Pentecost

Orlando Redekopp

On Jan. 15, 1985, Martin Luther King's birthday, while several hundred people marched in front of the South African consulate in Chicago, 10 people attempted to arrange a meeting with a South African representative. When no one answered the door, the group decided to wait until someone responded. At 6:30 p.m. the police arrived with the building manager and the 10 were arrested for trespassing.

On Feb. 7 this incident was repeated, this time with five people arrested. After several months of negotiations and preparations, the case came before a jury—eight people were charged with trespassing.

The main argument for the defendants, in legal terms, rested on the necessity of the action. We believed our actions were necessary to avoid a public injury greater than the injury which might result from our sit-in.

I was one of eight defendants arrested for demonstrating against apartheid and the United States' support for it. Having lived in South Africa and being a committed Christian, I struggled with the way I could articulate my defense. I wondered about the interest of the jury—by all appearances a pro-Reagan jury—in gospel values as a basis for such an action. I feared being counted among those who twisted biblical values to justify themselves. Most of all, I did not want to prooftext; I had a visceral fear of that disease. It too often afflicted the defenders of the status quo. What right-thinking person would swallow such a defense anyway?

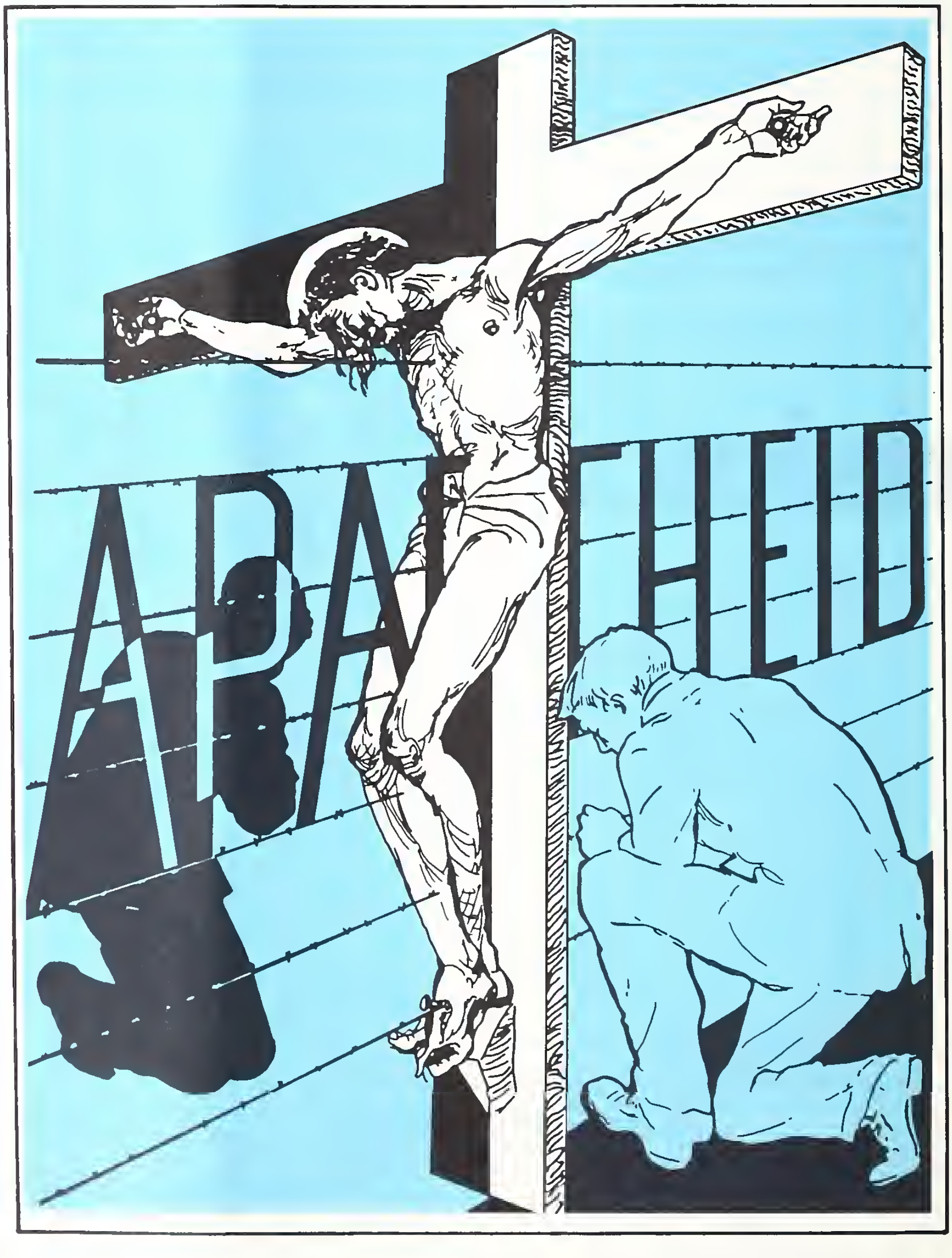
The two lawyers with whom I conferred chuckled over my private agonies. Their serious advice surprised me: "Tell them that you were reading the story of John the Baptist, while he was in prison, and Jesus' answer to John's question, 'Are you the One or should we expect another?' Preach to them!"

If these two lawyers who had defended Black Panthers and the Pontiac Prison inmates could tell me that, who was I to stick to my more tentative, abstract, even timid position? Should I merely say that God is on the side of the poor, God is a God of justice? If my convictions were rooted in the actual biblical stories, why should I fear the abuse of those stories by others?

In retrospect, my fears were ironic. I was ready to share my experiences in South Africa. I eagerly anticipated my many "commissionings" by South Africans: "Go home and support our struggle by changing your country's policies that undergird apartheid." I was not hesitant to describe apartheid as slavery and genocide, and America's willingness to profit from it. I was confident in all of this. But I was nervous about whether I could explicitly state the roots of my convictions in a credible way.

With the two lawyers' advice still buzzing in my ears and the admonition from others to speak passionately, I awaited my turn in the witness chair. When the time came, I installed myself to directly face the jury: "My church, the Mennonite Church and the Church of the Brethren, and I personally believe that if it is in the Bible,

When this placard appeared on the grounds of St. George's Anglican Cathedral in Cape Town back in 1959, it created a severe uproar. But the fence of evil apartheid still stands today. It is by the wondrous grace and mercy of God that in spite of such grievous sin beautiful evidences of God's Holy Spirit at work come forth as in the Redekopp story.



we should do it. Three convictions—relevant to the case—flow out of this.

"1. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers.' Jesus said, 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.' Jesus said, 'Blessed are you if you are persecuted for righteousness sake.' I believe that we should hunger and thirst after peace and justice, that we should seek justice and be willing to pay the price for it. If we believe in Jesus, then we *have* to seek peace and justice.

"2. Jesus said, in response to John the Baptist's question, that there are two ways you can tell if 'I am the One.' Jesus said, 'The blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised to life, and blessed are those who are not offended by me.' I believe, as does my church, that to know Christ is to follow Christ. If I want to know Christ, I must work against all that causes death, blindness, lameness, all that destroys life, and must work for all that affirms life.

"3. I believe that the church is a body. As a body, no part can say to another part, 'I do not need you.' No part can say to another part, 'I do not know you.' When one part suffers, we all suffer. When one part cries out for help, all parts must respond. This body cannot respect racial, ethnic, economic or international boundaries. If my Christian brothers and sisters in South Africa tell me of the pain of apartheid, and commission me to return home to oppose this country's support for it, then as part of the body I must respond to that mandate. If we are one body, then I must do all that I can to educate people, to raise the issue of our investments in apartheid, and to work to change the policies here at home. If I do not do that, then we are not one body.

"I lived for three years (as an MCC worker) in southern Africa—1977-80. For 2½ years my wife and I administered a UN-funded school for the Soweto '76 student refugees in Botswana. From there we moved to South Africa for six months, researching and writing a study guide on apartheid's policy of forced removals.

"All the people we met during this time—students and teacher refugees in Botswana, church workers, banned people and those who experienced or faced removals in South Africa—gave us one unanimous message: 'Return home to tell your people how apartheid destroys individuals, families, communities, churches, the land. Oppose and change your country's support for apartheid. You are most helpful when you can end America's support for this vicious persecution we face just because of the color of our skin.'

"As a Christian I was compelled to respond to this pain of apartheid. To do otherwise is to deny my commitment to the body, to deny my human and Christian links with the sisters and brothers in South Africa.

"This sit-in was not my first act to challenge the prevailing understanding and policy of this country. Upon returning from South Africa in 1980, I spent three months traveling and speaking with churches and other groups about our links with South Africa. I wrote letters, personally visited elected officials and campaigned for a divestment bill in the Illinois legislature. But the United States became more and more involved in strengthening the apartheid system, especially in our present foreign policy of 'constructive engagement,' with increased economic, financial and high-tech assistance. This sit-in was one more attempt to challenge our collective collaboration with that demonic policy. All other avenues of protest and challenge had been tried. Yes, I was 'forced' by the commissionings of my South African sisters and brothers to break, in a peaceful manner, the smaller law of trespassing to prevent further injury and loss of life."

"Pentecost came home to me."

This testimony was only one of eight testimonies by the defendants. Numerous other witnesses supported our actions as necessary, including the exiled South African poet Dennis Brutus, Sen. Paul Simon, Rep. Charles Hayes, longtime activist Prexy Nesbit and U.S. representative to UNICEF Marjorie Benton.

The jury received its instructions from the judge to weigh the evidence, including our appeal to the necessity of the action. They returned 2½ hours later to deliver a unanimous *not-guilty verdict.* The initial exhilaration was sustained by the warm and infectious comments of several jury members. One asked where to join the picket line. Another thanked me for speaking from the Bible. A third juror stated, "We found that they acted out of necessity. We were concerned that other people might start trespassing, but we also had to do the right thing."

One of the alternate jurors confessed that on the final day of the trial, he had gone to the 6:30 a.m. Mass and prayed for each one of the defendants, prayed that he could serve on the jury. He had also asked his pastor to become involved. Then he commented somewhat apologetically that he had even voted for Reagan. But he could not understand how one could love the Lord and still support apartheid.

What did I learn from all this? First, Pentecost came home to me. Pentecost as the boldness of the Spirit: "Now as the Jewish rulers observed the boldness of Peter and John . . . they recognized them as former companions of Jesus. . . . When the believers had ended their prayer, the building where they were assembled rocked, and all were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:13, 31).

I believe that Pentecost also occurred within the jury. The jury's first vote was divided, with eight against us and only four for us. Two-and-a-half hours later all voted for our acquittal. The original four supporters stated that they would stay forever before their vote would change. Something moved the others to recognize the larger evil and the "innocence" of trespassing. When the jury heard of the horror of apartheid, they were moved like the early church when it responded to Peter's experience with Cornelius and family in Joppa: "When they heard this their doubts were silenced" (Acts 11:18).

The jury also confirmed what God had already revealed many years earlier to the Israelite captives in Egypt: When human order becomes God's disorder, life can be affirmed even through illegal acts.

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The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

In search of balance—Acts 2:42-47

Roy Matheson

"Why is the church so exciting at times and so boring on other occasions?"

"The church. How I love it. How I hate it. How it meets my needs. How it frustrates me. I will always work in the church. I give up—God can use me someplace else." Thus wrote a friend of mine as he reflected on the church family of which he was a member (Tucker, *The Plexiglass Pulpit*). Those are often my feelings as well, and if we were honest, all of us would confess this type of ambivalence when we think about the church.

If the church is divinely instituted, why do we experience these frustrations? Why is the church so exciting at times and so boring on other occasions? One reason is that the church is a family of people in various stages of spiritual growth. Human families experience tensions, so it is understandable that God's family is no different.

There is, however, a more basic reason. The church has lost the sense of balance that characterized the early Christian community. Those early Christians had a remarkable sense of equilibrium. Like the high-wire performer at the circus who keeps everything equalized lest he tumble to the net below, the early church had a number of checks and balances to keep it moving ahead.

A study of Acts 2:42-47 reveals this. This paragraph provides us with a window to look through and see God's family in action. The passage is well thumbed and often studied. Because of our familiarity with it, we are apt to miss the forces that act and react against each other and that keep things dynamic rather than dull.

The early church was both firm and flexible. Believers were steadfast in their basic message but flexible in the way they presented it. A sample of this message is found in the opening part of Acts 2 and actually gives rise to the conditions described later in the chapter. This message does not change. It deals with the redemptive events of the life of Jesus Christ predicted in the Old Testament. This unchanging message runs like a vertebrae through the Book of Acts, and the apostles use it to call people to repentance.

There is, on the other hand, great variety in how the message was presented and the methods that were used. The apostles used preaching, dialogue and individual witness. The miracles were powerful visual aids that authenticated the message. The church was sensitive to the groups to whom it ministered, as a comparison of the sermons in Acts 2, 13, 14 and 17 will demonstrate. It is the same message presented in different ways.

Our message is likewise unchanging. It centers on the risen Christ, is based on an infallible Bible and calls people to a decision. How the message is presented is another matter. For some congregations the time of worship and the order of the service is chiseled in granite. Here are areas where flexibility is called for if it will help us meet more needs.

Recently in our congregation one of the members offered to take responsibility for the Bible reading for the next 10 Sundays. He proceeded to enlist a variety of people from children to adults. They prepared carefully beforehand and read the Scriptures in a group of anywhere from two to eight people on a given Sunday. The Bible came to life in the process, and the reading of God's Word was a high point of the morning service and not an opportunity to go wool-gathering. The same innovative approach to all our ministry can give scriptural balance to the body of Christ.

The early church informed the mind, but it also touched the emotions. Verse 42 speaks of two items: the apostles' teaching and fellowship. There was consistent input of scriptural data as the Word was expounded. In addition to this cognitive input there was fellowship that met the affective, emotional needs of believers as they related to each other. Teaching without fellowship soon becomes sterile. The church becomes a Christian cafeteria that the saints patronize on Sundays to receive professionally prepared meals. Many personal needs never surface, however, and people go away unfilled.

Fellowship without teaching can be just as deadly. The church can be a center for pop psychology, where we reaffirm one another in our idiosyncrasies. Scriptural teaching wedded to real fellowship keeps the personal relationships on the right path. As in Acts 2, it involves sharing of both the tangible and intangible. Those in the church of Acts 2 shared themselves and their possessions (v. 45).

Fellowship means opening myself up to be ministered to and to minister. It means placing my material possessions at God's disposal. It may entail using my car to transport someone to the doctor. It may necessitate helping a couple meet mortgage payments when the husband is unexpectedly laid off work. The legitimacy of the need is assessed by the scriptural teaching we are receiving. This guards us from sharing in an irresponsible manner but keeps us sensitive to people who have legitimate needs.

The church of Acts 2 ministered in both a large and small way. The church met in the temple courts (v. 46), since that was one of the few places in Jerusalem that could accommodate 3,000-5,000 people. It also met in houses to relate to each other on a smaller scale.

We need the same variety in our groups. There are things that we can do best in a large group on Sunday morning, but big is not always best. There are other needs that can only be met in a group of eight to 12 people. The small group is an ideal way to assimilate new people into the life of the congregation.

"We've been sitting on the sidelines for almost two years," a friend recently said to me. "We came to the church eager to serve, but somehow we can't break into the inner circle. I don't think anyone intends it this way. They are friendly to us on Sunday morning, but that is as far as it goes. We are getting discouraged and may move on."

A small group can meet that need. If the leaders of the group are capable and mature they can enlist members for service and help them utilize their gifts in a larger context.

The church of Acts 2 was committed to both joyous worship and consistent outreach. Words such as "glad," "sincere" and "praising God" leap out of this paragraph (vv. 46-47). The results were seen in an ongoing evangelistic effort. Every day people were finding Christ in a personal way (v. 47). The quality of life when the church was gathered determined its effectiveness when it had scattered.

We have to monitor both the journey inward and the journey outward. We need both old and new forms of music to express our devotion to God. This, in turn, will prepare us to touch lives in the marketplace. The Lord will add to his church those who are saved. The presence of new believers will, in turn, encourage those who have been in the body for some time. Church doesn't have to be boring and routine. As the fresh breezes of the Holy Spirit blow through the congregation, a biblical balance will be produced. God's people will look forward to being there.

Roy Matheson has been a pastor and teacher over the past 25 years. He is a professor of New Testament at Ontario Theological Seminary and staff pastor at Chartwell Baptist Church in Oakville, Ont. His article is reprinted by permission from the Evangelical Recorder, *Spring 1985, 25 Ballyconnor Court, Willowdale, ON M2M 4B3.*

Without incident

Mareye Yeates

2,000 feet
beneath the
Yucca Flat
a bomb
(a nuclear bomb)
exploded. Saturday.
Deep beneath
the Nevada desert
who knows what
was destroyed.
The short report
(in the Sunday paper)
claims the bomb
was detonated
without incident.
It also states
that this bomb
was up to 10 times
as powerful
as the one that
destroyed Hiroshima.
Common sense
tells me "without incident"
is not true.
The earth's sweet
belly
torn and ripped
deep beneath
the surface . . .
torn by something
only meant for killing
is not "without incident."

Mareye Yeates wrote this on March 24, two days after the nuclear test in Nevada. Mareye is a member of the Fort Collins Mennonite Fellowship, 400 Whedbee St., Fort Collins, CO 80524.

The fruit stand

Clifford Goldstein

I love a fruit stand. The shapes, the colors splatter across my eyes, the smells curl up my nose and my mouth secretes imaginary tastes.

Next time you eat an apple—red, yellow or green—think about the shape, the color, the smell and the taste oozing with nutrients and minerals—the stuff we are made of. To eat calcium, potassium, chlorine, iron, copper and zinc, we don't chew, lick or suck them raw and grainy out of the ground. Instead we crunch into an apple, burst a grape in our mouth or mash a banana with our teeth.

We learn about creators by their creations. Bosch's painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights* crawls with grotesque fantasies, degrading sensuality, monsters, demons and violence, which reveals the evil in his heart. William Faulkner paraded so many murderers, bigots, perverts, thieves, adulterers, rapists, necrophiliacs and arsonists across the pages of his novels they must have been permanent residents of his mind. Goya's *Black Paintings*, mythological scenes of savagery and violence, show his gloomy, twisted soul. Albert Camus' books display the despair, pessimism and hopelessness that tormented him. Sylvia Plath's poetry cried out with the pain that pushed her head into the oven where she gassed herself. Be glad that the mind that imagined and made the strawberry, not the *Black Paintings*, is the mind that imagined and made people.

Yet people have the violence, suffering, hate, tragedy, perversions, hunger and anger that these artists have depicted.

But these aberrations are not God's. He made marriage and sex; people become adulterers and pornographers. He stocked the earth with material blessings; people become selfish. He created races and wove fire; people burn crosses. He gave us words; we lie and curse. He gave us intelligence; we are proud. He breathed life into us; we kill. He gave us freedom; we have stitched the planet in barbed wire. He gave us music; people are punk rockers. He gave us grapes; people become drunks.

And these are the reasons why war, disease, violence, hatred, suffering, alienation, death and poverty scar the world. This is not God's doing. Instead the vines that wrap the earth with grapes and watermelons, and the trees that cover the earth with tangerines, lemons, cherries and bananas are God's doing—his thoughts, ideas and words made real, tangibles that we can sink our teeth into. And if there is a blotch on the banana, remember that God made the banana first—the blotch came after.

There's more than fruit in the fruit stand. There's hope. When I look at peaches, pears and plums, I know that God must exist. Cranberries, cherries and pineapples are unmistakable evidence that God cares. Mangoes, bananas and strawberries show that, despite despair, we can trust God. The Bible says God loves us, and raspberries, blackberries and avocados make it easier to believe. In the fruit stand I can feel God smiling down upon me and hear him from heaven, saying, "See, I really do love you. Just trust me."

That's why I love a fruit stand. An apricot might not be the answer to my problems, but it shows me that God is.

I don't have the faith to believe that chance put a peach tree in the pit, put the pit in the peach and put the peach on a tree any more than I believe that evolution made watermelon melt in my mouth.

There's a story about a man who mocked God because acorns sat atop tall trees while watermelon crushed thin vines into the ground. If God was so smart, why didn't he place the acorn on the vine and the watermelon atop the tree, he chided—until one day an acorn fell on his head.

A rabbi once wrote that the heathen, who have never known about the true God or the Holy Scriptures, can learn enough about God through nature that on judgment day they will be without excuse.

Next time you enter a fruit stand, pick up an orange. No earthly parents could have imagined anything so perfect for their children, and they grow on trees—millions upon millions—juicy, tasty, saturated with the elements of life. Imagine if, instead of squashing an orange in your mouth, the only way to get your vitamin C was to eat tablets or get an injection. Grab a pomegranate, a melon, a pear—and open your eyes. Forget your own ideas, your preconceived opinions, prejudices, worldly philosophies, and get back to basics. Whoever made the melon had to be good.

Raspberries, boysenberries, guava, pomegranates (How could anyone look at these and not see the love of God?), passion fruit, papaya, grapes, limes, cantaloupe, nectarines (it's like the Garden of Eden), pineapple, cranberries, blueberries. . . .

And we haven't got to the veggies!

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The fruit stand gives so many reasons for faith. And we haven't even got to the veggies!

Have you heard the earth cry?

Arnold Regier

"Have you heard the earth cry?" Dieter Ptassek asked at the German Evangelical Lutheran Kirchentag in Düsseldorf in June 1985. The theme for this conference of more than 125,000 people was "The Earth Is the Lord's."

The relationship between peace and ecology is becoming a worldwide concern. Scientists are more aware of the unbroken wholeness in the cosmic matrix of creation.

Alfons Aur, a German Catholic philosopher and theologian, has written that the church must provide us with intellectual, ethical and aesthetic bases for living. Natural resources must be used for physical nurture *and* for satisfying the inner spirit.

By observing wildflowers outside his window, Francis of Assisi developed a unique awareness which bound faith and knowledge. He preferred to preach outside on a blooming meadow to speaking in a church. He slowly developed a foundation for setting aside native grasslands and developing a sustainable agriculture. He was one of the first Christian leaders to develop such an awareness of God's creation. In a recent visit to Assisi I found his Canticle of Creation.

"Most high omnipotent good Lord, to Thee praise, glory, honor and every benediction.

"To Thee alone Most High do they belong. And no man is worthy to pronounce Thy Name.

"Praise be to Thee my Lord with all creatures. Especially for Master Brother Sun, who illuminates the day for us, and Thee Most High he manifests. . . .

"Praise be to Thee my Lord for our Sister Mother Earth, who nourishes and sustains us all, bringing forth divers fruits and many-colored flowers and herbs.

"Praise be to Thee my Lord for those who pardon for love of Thee and who bear infirmity and tribulation.

"Blessed be those who live in peace, for by Thee Most High they shall be crowned.

". . . O bless and praise my Lord all creatures, and thank and serve him in deep humility."

It is regrettable that many Christian leaders read only the words in Genesis 1:28, ". . . fill it (the earth) and subdue it." It has been the basis of much selfishness and destructive abuses. They did not appreciate nature poems like Psalm 104, ". . . the earth is full of thy creation."

Our attitude toward nature has social consequences; here the battle for justice is won or lost. Nature's elasticity, hitherto taken for granted, may be about to snap. Biologically, chemically and physically the accelerating deterioration of our environment has become acute.

Gottfried Arnold, a historian writing of the Middle Ages, quotes an old saying, "Bringst du Zinsz, bringst du Geld, Frohnen auch heute die Bauern." (The church leaders demanded money to the extent that even farmers suffered from these abuses.) With the exception of Francis of Assisi, it seems that most monastic orders were not sensitive to people who suffered from malnutrition because of agricultural mismanagement. Later it led to strife and warfare.

Ecology today means we need to learn about peace between people and nature. The poisoning of the soil, water and air threatens all of us. Europe was once 90 percent forests; now it's 25 percent. America has lost three-fifths of its wooded areas. Australia has lost much of its fertile soil through wind erosion.

Peace, justice and creation. Increasing numbers of church leaders and scientists are unitedly exploring how we can develop a deeper awareness of ecological systems that need to be restored.

Germany is introducing ecology courses in the schools. In Osnabrück study and work projects involved children in land programs that incorporated different ecosystems. This program conducted its scientific research in native meadows and forests.

H. Guderjahn, a Mennonite educator from Hameln, called my attention to a statue of Demeter, who was depicted in ancient Greek mythology as the goddess of agriculture and peace. In contrast to bloody sacrifices preferred by soldiers, Demeter was viewed by women as best understanding them harvesting corn in the fall. Next to this statue was a Latin inscription, "Envy is always the companion of wealth."

New Creation Fellowship holds a baptism at the native peace prairie.

Leo Brown, a retired Indian soil conservationist, helps Kansas farmers restore native grasslands and develop ecological soil programs. He assisted our family, together with members of New Creation Fellowship, Newton, Kan., in developing a "native peace prairie" east of Newton. Brown understands Indian lore and the use of prairie plants for food, medicine and dyes. He has also made wildflower seeds available so that the plants produced can in future years enhance the area.

When my forebears emigrated from the Vistula Delta in Prussia to Kansas, they brought along a concern for responsible agricultural methods. My great-grandfather brought legume seeds, which he used in Kansas crop rotations. He did not plow up all the land but allowed a large section to remain in its native prairie state. He taught his family not to overgraze the pastures.

As a result the earth under that protective covering does not "cry out," as in many devastated regions. As I walk on that prairie today I find peace, healing and a joy in observing God's sustaining creation.

Arnold Regier, 212 Pine St., Newton, KS 67114, is a retired educator.

By May 31, $946,663 (or 17.7 percent) of the General Conference budget had been received. This was 5.1 percent above the amount received last year at this time, which covers the first third of the fiscal year. The $5,624,320 budget is divided among overseas mission (65 percent), home ministries (18.3 percent), Mennonite Biblical Seminary (8.6 percent) and education (8.1 percent).

Seven people have formed an India Working Group for the General Conference. Year-to-year visa renewal for Edward and Ramoth Burkhalter (the only remaining GC missionaries in India) signals a change for Mennonite missions there. Discerning and discussing possible new initiatives for ministry in India is the new group's assignment. Three former missionaries to India (Norma Wiens, Lubin Jantzen, Kenneth Bauman) will join two overseas mission commission members (William Block and James Juhnke) and two staff (Erwin Rempel and John Sommer).

NEWS

Sexuality statement passed

Northern District called to discipleship

Mountain Lake, Minn.—Perry Yoder called on delegates to the 93rd Northern District Conference sessions to practice the justice of the kingdom of God. Hosted by the Gospel Mennonite Church here June 12-15, the conference met under the theme "Discipling One Another."

Yoder, associate professor of Old Testament at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., gave three talks. He began his first talk, "The Mission of the Church," with a story about his visit to the Philippines last summer. "What one sees as the mission of the church," he said, "depends upon where one stands"—either in a Filipino fishing village or in the government palace in Manila. The message of Jesus and of the early church was kingdom oriented. What we do to promote the kingdom of God is more important than anything, he said, "even church growth. . . . The church is not an end in itself but a vehicle for the proclamation of the kingdom."

In his second talk, "The Spirit of the Church," Yoder read four passages from Isaiah in which the Spirit is linked with works of justice. "The work of justice," he said, "is a work of the Spirit and is a sign of the Spirit's presence."

All of the talks were based on the Book of Acts. In his third, "The Growth of the Church," Yoder referred to several stories from Acts that illustrated commitment. We live in a society that endorses individualism, that does not promote commitment, he said. "The church should not be ashamed to ask for commitment." At the Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15), he pointed out, the decision relied as much or more on experience as on theological argument. What the fruits of this experience are is an important question. One of the key functions of discipling, he said, is to keep us clear about our priorities. Discipling is "active trust."

On the opening night of the conference, which included a communion service, 13 new pastors/church workers (including spouses) were introduced. Church planting efforts in the district were mentioned often, though these churches have seen little growth. Delegates affirmed church planting, however, when they agreed with an executive committee proposal to make Ernie Neufeld's full-time position of conference minister half time so that he can be employed half time as a church planter in the Fargo-Moorehead, N.D., area.

Several resolutions were passed at the conference, but two drew more response from delegates. Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, brought a resolution denouncing nuclear weapons and calling for "an immediate . . . moratorium on nuclear testing and . . . the negotiation of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty." An amendment extended the call for a moratorium beyond the United States to include all nuclear nations. The resolution passed with about a dozen voting against it.

The other vote drawing significant response concerned a statement on sexuality taken from the General Board's sexuality resolution for Saskatoon '86. The NDC statement consisted of the first two paragraphs of the "covenant" section of the larger resolution, leaving out the "affirmation" and "confession" sections. This selectivity bothered several respondents. Myron Schrag, pastor at Faith Church, Minneapolis, said the statement is premature, since most churches have not gone through the study document *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life*.

Marvin and Donita Payne Hostetler, co-pastors at First Mennonite Church, Lincoln, Neb., flank NDC president Aaron Glanzer. First Church, Lincoln, was welcomed as a new NDC member.

Albert Epp, pastor at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb., affirmed the statement and said that his congregation had studied the document. Dennis Webber, pastor at Bethlehem Mennonite Church, Bloomfield, Mont., also applauded the statement. "It's time to say that sin is sin," he said. "These people [homosexuals] need to repent of their sin." Paul Zoschke, pastor at Woodland Mennonite Church, Warroad, Minn., agreed but

Human Sexuality in the Christian Life, a working document prepared by the two largest Mennonite denominations, attracted over 60 people to a 12-session study at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church near Goessel, Kan. Myrna and Randy Krehbiel, family life coordinators for the General Conference, led the study. "We mainly scratched the surface," says Anne N. Rupp, co-pastor. "The series helped us face reality." Congregational study of human sexuality is being encouraged by the General Conference in preparation for the triennial sessions in Saskatoon July 21-27.

A group of concerned Christians from Japan, representing six denominations, including the Japan Mennonite Church, has written a letter to brothers and sisters in Christ in the United States expressing dismay about "the increased pressure from the U.S. to rearm our country, *with what looks like approval of many Christian churches*" (italics theirs). Secondly, the letter states, "most Japanese no longer think that the churches in North America have a deep interest in other parts of the world or that they can save the world from a violent destruction."

Infact, the organization that led the seven-year Nestlé boycott, on June 12 announced a new boycott against the General Electric Company "for its role in producing nuclear weapons and promoting the arms race." A television commercial featured in the campaign says, "GE: Isn't it time they really bring things to life?"

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called for "mercy, which follows truth."

Vic Buller of Duluth, Minn., said that there are people who can no more help being homosexual than some alcoholics can help getting drunk.

The statement passed by a ballot vote of 167 to 14.

The conference held five learnshops during the sessions: "Committee on the Ministry," "Development Committee," "COM/MCC," "Higher Education Concerns" and "Ethical Issues in the Farm Crisis." These were repeated, and participants were divided into five groups so that each one attended each learnshop.

In the farm crisis learnshop Howard Raid of Bluffton (Ohio) College asked, "Are we building personal empires or community?" The farm crisis, he said, resulted largely from listening to secular advisers, who advocated going for profits.

Three people presented "kingdom happenings" from their respective churches. Maurice Hirschy, pastor at the Mennonite Church of Billings, Mont., introduced "An Affirmation for the Right to Life," a statement approved by his church that opposes abortion as well as "war, poverty, discrimination due to age, handicap or race. . . ." He asked, "Should the Mennonite church have its own adoption agency?"

Helen Quintela, pastor at St. Paul (Minn.) Mennonite Fellowship, shared about her church's visitation program in the west St. Paul neighborhood, which is largely Hispanic.

Albert Epp of Henderson, Neb., told about a discipleship program in his church. Groups of 12 meet weekly for several months of Scripture and book study, sharing and prayer. He called it exciting and successful.

In the budget discussion NDC treasurer Winifred Saner pointed out that churches' giving fell $63,000 short of budget requests. Ben Sawatzky of Henderson, Neb., said he noticed a number of newer automobiles in the parking lot. "If we can afford new cars, we can give more." Myron Schultz of Bloomfield, Mont., the NDC's statistician, said that a number of churches give nothing to the conference.

The proposed budget of $198,535, barely above last year's, passed easily.

Elmer Wall was re-elected vice president, and Leroy Saner was re-elected secretary.

Next year's conference will be hosted by Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis. *Gordon Houser*

Hively Avenue Church declares sanctuary

Elkhart, Ind.—A year-long educational process helped the Hively Avenue Mennonite Church here decide to become a sanctuary church. The decision, which was made at a March 16 congregational meeting, was nearly unanimous.

The idea of providing sanctuary for Central American refugees first arose when a member learned of a Salvadoran family being sheltered by a congregation in Goshen, Ind. The family was invited to share its story with the congregation one Sunday. A panel discussion made the congregation aware of the plight of refugees from Central America, and a task force assisted Hively in studying the issue.

The task force soon became aware of Provisional Legal Refuge, a new program of the Overground Railroad that provides legal hosting of refugees, usually while they are attempting to get legal refugee status or immigrate to Canada. The program was shared with the congregation and a special meeting was called at which the congregation voted to "become involved in the Provisional Legal Refuge of a Central American brother or sister."

Within weeks of the July 1985 decision, Hively learned of two men who needed sponsors immediately and responded with bond money, transportation and initial hosting. José from El Salvador had been tortured before and had learned that he would be arrested again if he stayed. Margarito from Honduras had left to avoid being called up by the military.

In January a resolution to become a sanctuary was brought to the congregation, but members were not yet ready to make the decision, and it was postponed until the March meeting. By March people had taken the opportunity to consider the issue and had made up their minds. The discussion centered mainly around logistics and the effect that being a sanctuary church might have on the congregation's preschool program. The motion carried with 41 voting yes, two no and three abstaining.

When asked whether they had changed their minds about the issue over the past year and what made them change, members of the congregation mentioned the impact of José and Margarito putting a human face on the issue and the careful decision process.

Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Service, Inc. (MHRS) is seeking a director to begin duties as soon as possible. Responsibilities include all operations and programs, personnel management, financial and long-range planning, publicity, fund raising and public relations. Salary negotiable.

MHRS is a non-profit construction company, serving the needs of the elderly and low-income people. Applications from women and minorities are encouraged.

Send resume to:
MHRS
2038 N. Broadway
Wichita, KS 67214.

Six Turkish refugees are making their homes in one of the buildings of the European Mennonite Bible School near Liestal, Switzerland. The issue of refugees in Switzerland is receiving increasing attention among the Swiss Mennonite churches, according to *Zionspilger*, the official conference publication.

After 40 years of placing workers in the United States and Canada, Mennonite Voluntary Service has begun formation of an association of former volunteers. David Orr, personnel director of MVS, says that an occasional newsletter for former volunteers is planned. Everyone who has served short- or long-term assignments with MVS is being asked to notify the MVS office (Box 347, Newton, KS 67114) of their current address.

Transportation is the only cost of a three-day call to "Leaders Today for Tomorrow's Church" at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., Aug. 8-10. And travel stipends are available. Registration is limited to 50. Priority will be given to college juniors and seniors and to graduate students from other than Mennonite schools. In addition to worship and Bible study, attenders will hear descriptions for ministry in Mennonite churches. For more information contact James Metzler, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999, (219) 295-3726.

Academics discuss Mennonite self-understanding

Waterloo, Ont. (Meetinghouse)—A conference of Mennonite academics here May 28-31 illustrated the fundamental change that Mennonite identity in North America has undergone in the past few decades. In fact, this gathering may have signaled the end of the sectarian vision by which Mennonites have defined themselves.

About 120 participants examined the topic "Toward a Mennonite Self-Understanding" at a conference sponsored by the Mennonite Bicentennial Commission and the Institute of Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies at Conrad Grebel College. Several assumptions quickly emerged. Scholars agreed that "modernity" has fundamentally changed Mennonites in North America. Gone is the normative vision of Anabaptism outlined by Harold Bender in the 1940s. Assumed are heterogeneous origins and current diversity.

No longer satisfied with simply remaining true to the past, these Mennonite academics drew on the tools of their disciplines to be highly self-critical, not only of Mennonite self-perceptions but of their own disciplines. Each presentation was criticized by an "outside" respondent as well as a Mennonite one. And the event was substantially funded by a public grant.

Hans-Juergen Goertz, theologian and social historian at the University of Hamburg, West Germany, opened the conference with a call for Mennonites to challenge the current political, cultural and social environment with insights from their past. Labeling the current situation among Mennonites "a crisis of integration," Goertz urged Mennonites to rouse themselves from their passivity and reassert their legacy of "fraternity" in leading society to a more human form.

Historian Jim Juhnke of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., raised some eyebrows with his insistence on two separate Mennonite stories in North America—the Swiss/South German and the Dutch/Russian.

"My own study of the early 1900s has convinced me [that] the cultural difference [are] so far reaching that [they] must be made basic to our fundamental conceptualization of historical North American Mennonite reality in this era." Juhnke was pushed to recognize other ethnicities in his scheme as well.

Don Kraybill, sociologist from Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, focused on the Swiss story. Mennonite ethnicity is still strong today, he argued, but in a radically different form. Today we claim a peoplehood based on a common history (we choose our own interpretation) and participation in Mennonite organizations and "portable networks" around the world that allow upwardly mobile, assimilated Mennonites to move freely among the various social and professional worlds they inhabit. In this new urban ethnicity, our practice has changed to ideology and our homogeneity has splintered into diversity.

In her analysis of art and literature, Hildi Tiessen of Wilfrid Laurier University defined the Mennonite artist as one nurtured in the community but often standing outside of it, who transforms the commonplace into the aesthetic, thus providing "new lenses" through which the community can view itself. John Ruth, in a delightful response, suggested that we should create an anthology of all those artists who think they've "been done in" by the Mennonite community. His "Swiss perspective" viewed the artist as rooted responsibly within the community.

Psychology has served as a "socialization agent into modernity," said Al Dueck of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary. He delineated the points at which "psychological ideology" is in conflict with the communal identity of a people. Respondent Vic Koop, Goshen (Ind.) College, distinguishing between academic and applied psychology, denounced Mennonites for their sellout to "marketplace psychology" in their pastoral training and mental health institutions.

Delbert Wiens of Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College surveyed Mennonite involvement in the discipline of philosophy. And what one might consider a major topic, Mennonites and the Bible, was confined to a historical overview by Perry Yoder of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Conference organizers explained that the Mennonite relationship to the Bible was implicit in all the other presentations.

Moving beyond the descriptive or historical was the paper on theology by Jim Reimer of Conrad Grebel College. Reimer proposed that a doctrinal/confessional center can move Mennonites beyond multiple ethnicities to a unifying faith in the modern age. This normative center is a "way of expressing the essentials of the Christian faith in a creative and dynamic way rather than a set of petrified dogmas."

While Reimer proposed "Creation, Fall-Redemption and Consummation" as a framework in which to fashion theology, respondent Denny Weaver of Bluffton College insisted that the "Jesus story" must be the central organizing principle for Mennonite theology.

Someone noted the "well-modulated disagreement" that prevailed. Discussion was forthright. "Our professionalism washes us away from the community," said one person. "A conference like this washes us back again." *Margaret Loewen Reimer*

In 1979 four farmers in central Haiti started meeting with their friends and neighbors to talk about forming community groups based on the biblical principles of love, human dignity and justice. Today about 400 men and women in the area belong to 35 such groups that have brought about significant improvements in the lives of the peasants near Mombin Crochu. The groups have planted community gardens, capped springs for potable water, established fruit and coffee tree nurseries and set up an agricultural supply store. Mennonite Central Committee workers have been involved in helping form and support these groups.

A major shipment of humanitarian supplies arrived in Managua, Nicaragua, April 16. The $35,000 shipment, part of a nationwide campaign, includes school, health and medical supplies; clothing, soap, bicycles with spare parts, and several large rolls of plastic construction sheeting for emergency refugee housing. This 20,200-pound shipment is the seventh in three years by the American Friends Service Committee. The Nicaraguan Ecumenical Committee for Development (CEPAD) will oversee its distribution.

All charitable organizations owe contributors disclosure of their bookkeeping, asserts columnist Sydney Harris. "I would not donate a nickel to a national charitable organization that did not willingly provide all donors with full information on what percentage of contributions goes for administration, fund-raising and public relations, and what amount is left over for the 'cause,' " he wrote.

Mennonite tour group protests detention of Salvadorans

San Salvador, El Salvador (MCC)—A North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ tour group to Central America arrived here several days after nine human rights church workers were abducted. The workers are now being detained by the Salvadoran Hacienda Police.

A former Salvadoran human rights worker, Luz Jeanete Alfaro, was abducted by the military in mid-May and served as a key witness in these detentions as well as denunciations of several church agencies working with displaced people.

The human rights workers were picked up by heavily armed men in civilian clothing in downtown San Salvador or in their homes in daylight and are being held by the military.

A statement released by the 12 members of the Mennonite Central Committee tour group reads, "MCC works directly with many of these people and supports the Christian and humanitarian nature of their work. We join with their families and churches in praying for their safety and encouraging respect for their lives and ministry."

The six-year war in El Salvador has largely become "an invisible war" with many civilians still dying but with newspapers largely ignoring the war. In the last few months MCC workers in rural El Salvador have reported an increasingly intense air war that has resulted in even more refugees and displaced people from the countryside.

The tour group met with villagers and visited several large displaced persons camps in El Salvador and reported that the "common plea [of Salvadorans] is, 'Please tell your government to stop sending arms to El Salvador. As the U.S. aid continues, the suffering continues.' "

The tour group met with pastors and lay leaders persecuted because of their efforts to serve the needy, with political prisoners who have suffered torture and with many farming families who have been forced to leave their villages because of the violence. The tour reported that these people urged them over and over, "Please tell what you have seen and heard." *Joy Hofer*

Self-help and thrift shop to be opened in Hamilton in August requires a manager on a voluntary service basis.

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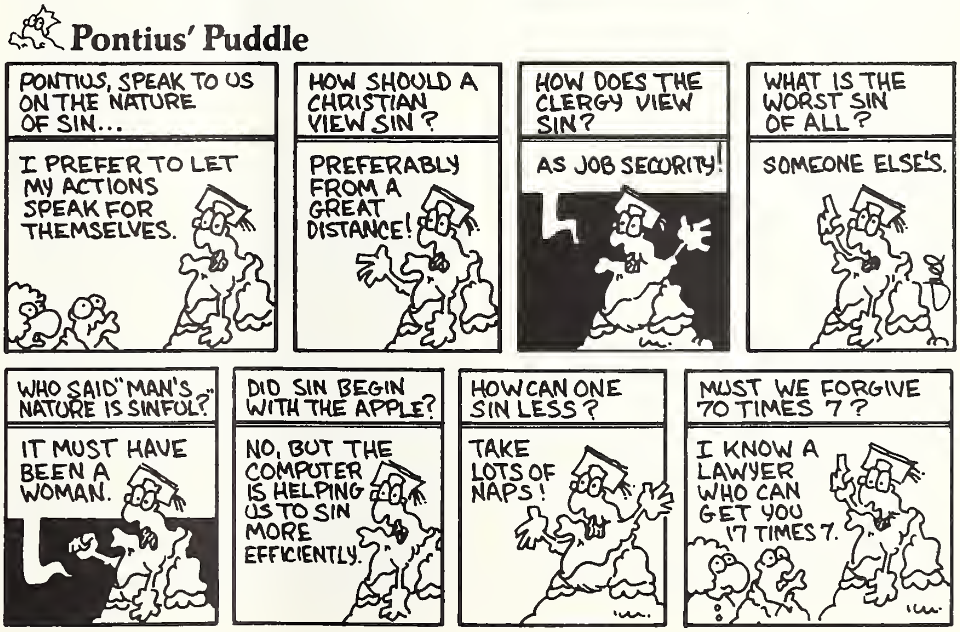
Pontius' Puddle
PONTIUS, SPEAK TO US ON THE NATURE OF SIN...
I PREFER TO LET MY ACTIONS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.
HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN VIEW SIN?
PREFERABLY FROM A GREAT DISTANCE!
HOW DOES THE CLERGY VIEW SIN?
AS JOB SECURITY!
WHAT IS THE WORST SIN OF ALL?
SOMEONE ELSE'S.
WHO SAID "MAN'S NATURE IS SINFUL"?
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A WOMAN.
DID SIN BEGIN WITH THE APPLE?
NO, BUT THE COMPUTER IS HELPING US TO SIN MORE EFFICIENTLY.
HOW CAN ONE SIN LESS?
TAKE LOTS OF NAPS!
MUST WE FORGIVE 70 TIMES 7?
I KNOW A LAWYER WHO CAN GET YOU 17 TIMES 7.

The Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan has announced its first-ever Sunday school convention, scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 26, at Rosthern Junior College. The all-day combination of worship and workshops will be for church school teachers. Churches are being encouraged to release their teachers for this day.

One more nomination was inadvertently left out of the list in the June 10 issue. Nominated for the Commission on Education is *Jo Ropp*, Foundation Series resource person for Central District; member, Central District education committee, 1983-; former director of Christian education, Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill. Vision: "That Christian education is a lifelong nurturing process, in the formal and informal setting. My hope is that COE will help facilitate that process."

A Mennonite Men's task force chaired by president Irvin D. Voth is coming to Saskatoon with a proposal that General Conference Mennonite Men do four things they are not now doing: employ a part-time staff person, have representatives from regional conferences meet once a year at the annual Council of Commissions, adopt a budget and consult regularly with Women in Mission. A fifth proposal asks that the major project for the next three years be the promotion and support of the Tenth Man church planting project. Mennonite Men will meet on Wednesday afternoon, July 23, during the GC triennial sessions.

Health-care occupations draft registration proposed

Akron, Pa. (MCC U.S.)—Male and female medical professionals ages 18 to 46 will be required to register for the draft if proposed legislation is adopted. The House and Senate Armed Services Committees were expected to consider the proposal during June or early July.

The American Medical Association opposes the bill on the grounds that it discriminates against a class of people, namely medical personnel.

This proposal may come before the committees as an amendment to the Fiscal Year 1987 Department of Defense Authorization Act. Such an amendment would probably be based on a bill, H.R. 4346, introduced in the House on March 6 by Rep. G.U. (Sonny) Montgomery (D-Mass.).

"The absence of a provision for conscientious objectors to express their conviction *at the time of registration* will heighten the struggle of conscience for Mennonite health-care personnel should this measure pass," says John Stoner, MCC U.S. Peace Section executive secretary and chairperson of the National Inter-religious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors.

Peace Revival will be part of triennial sessions

Newton, Kan.—Evening gatherings to share stories of prophetic peacemaking have been scheduled for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, July 22-24, at 9 p.m. at triennial sessions of the General Conference at Saskatoon.

The evening peace revivals will be free-flowing, upbeat testimony times. Marilyn Hamm, Chuck Neufeld and Kris Chupp will coordinate the music. Emcees for the three evenings will be Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Menno Wiebe and another person to be named.

Everyone working for peace and justice is encouraged to come prepared to share a testimony through song, poetry, skit, story or other creative medium. Exact location of the revival will be announced in the daily newssheet.

The Saskatoon Peace Revival was initiated by the Service Order, a dispersed covenanted group, committed to weaving the threads of spirituality, justice action and biblical discernment into the fabric of their daily lives.

Associate pastor needed

Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Church is seeking a full-time associate pastor. This could be a shared position.

Primary responsibilities would be youth ministry, assisting with pulpit duties and ability to work with church music.

For information or application contact:
Vern Lobe, congregational chairman
Box 583
Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0
(306) 232-4930.

Youth pastor needed

Beryl Jantzi has announced his resignation as youth pastor at **Akron Mennonite Church** effective in August. The congregation has appreciated his service during the past four years.

Individuals interested in applying for the position of youth pastor are encouraged to write to:
Akron Mennonite Church
Box 208
Akron, PA 17501.

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The Conrad Grebel College board of governors on April 17 approved a "direction statement" that will see the college's Institute of Anabaptist Mennonite Studies concentrate its funding and research efforts on the Russian Mennonite experience "until the Russian Mennonite Studies program is fully grounded." The new direction will involve an active search for "substantial endowment" to fund the program. The two other primary programs under the institute's umbrella are Anabaptist studies and Canadian Mennonite studies.

A Frank Epp Memorial publication is being assembled by Mennonite Central Committee Canada. The book is to include a selection of Epp's writings projecting his vision for the faithful church, and MCC's role in that mission. A suggested list of writings to be included in the memorial book will be compiled and presented to the MCCC executive committee in September. People may send their suggestions by July 30 to Waldo Neufeld, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

The human rights of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation suffered further setbacks in 1985, according to the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and the Palestine Human Rights Campaign. The PHRC-ADC *Report on Israeli Human Rights Practices in the Occupied Territories for 1985* details human rights violations omitted by the U.S. State Department's 1985 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices.

RECORD

CALENDAR

July 21-27—General Conference triennial sessions, Saskatoon, theme: "Thy Kingdom Come"

Oct. 17-19—West Coast Mennonite Writers' Workshop, Salem, Ore.

Canada

Aug. 2—Brandon (Man.) MCC sale

Sept. 13—Morris (Man.) MCC sale

Sept. 14—Official opening of new MCC building

Oct. 18—Annual MCC women's auxiliary meeting, Grunthal, Man.

Nov. 21-22—MCC Manitoba annual meeting, Blumenort EMC Church

Western

Oct. 17-19—Western District Conference, Wichita, Kan.

MINISTERS

Tim Lehman, former campus pastor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., will begin as assistant pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., in September.

Marilyn Miller, pastor at Boulder (Colo.) Church, was granted the Doctor of Ministry degree on May 24 by the San Francisco Theological Seminary. She is the first female pastor in the General Conference to obtain this degree and the second pastor in the Western District currently having this degree.

Thomas Schultz, pastor at Harleysville Church, Indian Valley, Pa., resigned in March. *Henry Ruth* is serving as interim pastor.

Jonathan Yoder will begin as pastor at East Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa., in July. *Walter Dick*, present pastor, will remain as pastor of visitation.

WORKERS

Lowell Detweiler, Akron (Pa.) Church, has been appointed executive coordinator of Mennonite Disaster Service, effective Aug. 1. He succeeds *C. Nelson Hostetter*, who retires in August after 15 years of leadership to this binational organization.

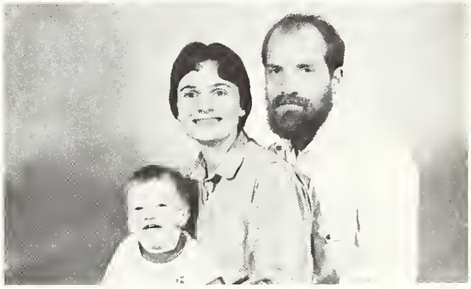
Laurel Gale, Plow Creek Fellowship, Tiskilwa, Ill., has been appointed to Taiwan as an Overseas Mission Volunteer (COM) for a two-year term. A 1986 Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., graduate, she leaves for Taiwan in July, and will begin her teaching assignment at Hualien Christian School in August.

Mary and *Paul M. Lederach*, Scottdale, Pa., have been appointed to a four-month teaching assignment beginning Sept. 13 at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India. They are sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions (MC) and the Commission on Overseas Mission (GC).

Glen and *Marianne Neufeld*, North Star Church, Drake, Sask., have begun three-year MCC terms in Chile. Glen is a construction coordinator and Marianne is a community development worker. She received a bachelor's degree in home economics and dietetics from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff and a certificate in healthcare administration from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. He received a diploma from Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute. They have one child, Jacob. His parents are Jake and Margaret Neufeld of Drake. Her mother is Esther Morrison of Santa Fe, N.M.

Gale

Tiessen


Neufelds

Linda Nichols, First Church, Lincoln, Neb., is beginning a two-year MCC term as a social worker in Bonnyman, Ky., with sexually abused children and troubled adolescents. She has a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Idaho, Moscow. Her parents are John and Mary Curtis of Melba, Idaho.

Keith Nisly was appointed June 9 as public information director for Bluffton (Ohio) College. He is a 1986 graduate of Bluffton College with a bachelor's degree in communication and English.

Brenda Tiessen, Crystal City (Man.) Church, is beginning a two-year term in Winnipeg as a secretary with personnel services at MCC Canada. She previously served with MCC in Markham, Ont. Her parents are Elfrieda and Jake Tiessen of Crystal City.

In good company

David Janzen suggests that Frank Trnka may be guilty of "blasphemous libel" ("Letters," April 27 issue). The word "blasphemy" in the Gospels and Acts occurs predominantly in one context: representatives of the traditional religious system (identified as pharisees, scribes, or "the Jews") charge Jesus and his followers with blasphemy (Matthew 9:3; 26:65; Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21; John 10:33; Acts 6:11; etc.).

Jesus commented about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (a passage cited by Janzen) after religious leaders charged Jesus with casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub (Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:28; Luke 12:10). Today those who want to keep church power in heterosexually identified circles frequently charge lesbian and gay Christians with sin, evil motives and even "blasphemy."

Trnka was right, I believe, to suggest that differences of sexual preference are an opportunity for Christians to practice neighborly love ("Letters," March 11). Janzen's charge of blasphemy in response to Trnka simply puts Trnka in good company—with Jesus and his followers, who often sparked fear and harsh reactions by those whose power rested in the status quo. *John Linscheid, 330 E. Mt. Airy Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19119*

May 23

In support of Bible schools

I respond to the crisis at Swift Current Bible Institute (April 8 issue). I am running it off as I work nights at a hospital here in Egypt.

The focus seems to be on money. It's true we can't do much without it, but cannot the church donate to deficit as it donates to missions anywhere in the world? What is the dollar value on 42 lives who may contribute to the life of our church?

I'm a Bible school graduate and I'm glad for the growth in my Christian life because of the concentrated time in focus on the Bible. SCBI is a worthwhile investment. I'd vote for less emphasis on statistics and dollar value and more on the value of the present student body—however small it seems—to those who worry a lot about numbers.

We in our communities join unions and always strive for higher wages. On the other hand we expect pastors, church workers, SCBI teachers, to live on less. We all need to re-evaluate our priorities, but let's not use the world's measuring stick.

I care about SCBI and its future. I trust the constituency at large will respond and keep it operating by designating more church offerings to its operation as a missions project. It's worth it.

I'd like to put in an SOS for volunteer nurses for MCC. Not only Egypt, but almost every country MCC is involved in is experiencing a present shortage and demand for qualified nurses. Pass the word along in all Mennonite congregations and encourage a response among new potential workers. *Helena Peters,* MCC third term at *American Mission Hospital, Box 65, Tanta, Egypt*

June 2

Breath of fresh air

After all the recent rhetoric on homosexuality, the editorial by Mark Winslow, "Healing for Modern-Day Lepers" (May 13 issue), was like a breath of fresh air.

Written by an authority who is familiar with both sides, it was at the same time sensitive and redemptive, realistic and biblical, and put the whole issue into proper perspective.

It was especially timely since our church is currently studying the book on *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life.* I thank you for printing it. *Ellen Ortman, Route 2, Box 31, Marion, SD 57043*

June 2

That picture

I was offended by the decision to illustrate the article titled "Women Are Coming into Their Own" (May 27 issue) with a sculpture of a female Jesus Christ.

As a woman, I have never felt that to be truly complete I need a set of male physical appendages. Neither do I feel that Jesus, to be truly complete, needs a set of female physical appendages. *Connie Buller, Blair, NE 68008*

June 5

I am concerned about the picture of the sculpture of our Lord Jesus as a woman (May 27 issue). If this picture had appeared in a secular magazine, I would probably have not given it much attention. To have it printed in our conference paper was a saddening experience. Have we as a people departed so far from the Scriptures that we can accept or tolerate such a heresy? My prayer is that you will present articles and pictures which help to present Jesus as he is. *Harold Vercler, 701 Crestview Drive, Washington, IL 61571*

June 9

Editor's note: While we may not like the idea of the picture, it represents an artist's attempt to remind us of a truth. In some senses we fail to present Jesus "as he is" when we forget his qualities often considered "feminine" in our macho society.

Blasphemy! Sacrilegious! flashed to my mind as I looked at the sculpture of Jesus as a woman (May 27 issue).

The sculpture is an attack on the Trinity as well as the deity of Christ. It is also an attack on the Bible, God's revelation of himself. God revealed himself as Father (not mother), Son (not daughter) and Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father."

The biblical baptismal formula is: "In the name of the *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*" (Matthew 28:19). At the baptism of Jesus a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son (not daughter) in whom I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). According to Acts 2:22, "Jesus of Nazareth" was "a man (not a woman) approved of God. . . ." Some of our Lord's most popular titles in the four Gospels are "Son of Man" and "Son of God." A sculpture of Jesus with a sexy, feminine body is sheer blasphemy. No one should stoop so low to try and stress the importance of women in God's service. The Bible gives the woman a tremendous role, including ministries within the church fellowship.

Extreme feminist emphasis within our conference is causing churches to withdraw from General Conference. Unless an official voice assures us that what appeared in the May 27 issue is not endorsed by the conference, there will be further withdrawals. *Harold D. Burkholder, pastor, First Mennonite Church, Burns, KS 67041*

June 10

Editor's note: How could a piece of art from an Episcopal cathedral become our GC position? It is an artist trying to make a point—no more and no less.

LETTERS

When art gets us upset, it usually means that it is communicating something we don't understand or don't like.

We enjoy and appreciate our church magazine, *The Mennonite.* The bulk of the contents are informative and inspiring—just what we need in these times of stress and change.

Your editorial (May 27 issue) was much appreciated—a welcome summation of the several articles that needed to be written. Debbie Fast's article outlined the diversity of response to the role of women in the church. Mr. Campbell presented a sobering challenge to us in "Are We Silencing Our Finest?" Other writers added equally challenging comments.

We must protest the inclusion of the picture of Edwina Sandys' sculpture of Jesus as a woman (p. 222). We have been shocked at times by the free expression given to the discussion of homosexuality in letters to the editor, but this is going too far. We do not believe that these ultra-liberal spokespersons dare be given our church magazine as a sounding board in an attempt to crumple theological truths that to us are the heart of Scripture. We err in giving this brand of liberalism a stage. *Howard C. and Doris E. Steury, 404 Wilshire Drive, Washington, IL 61571*

June 10

I respond to the repulsive article by Victor C. Siebert and accompanying picture (May 27 issue).

If those people who advocate women leaders in our churches also believe that Scripture can be interpreted to raise doubt on the sex of the circumcised Jewish babe called Jesus (Luke 2:21), I do not value their judgment at all. *Veronica Friesen, Route 3, Box 106, Aurora, NE 68818*

June 12

"Wings,"
written and directed by Vickie Dyck,
premiers at Saskatoon '86.
A historical play of four women and
their Anabaptist faith

July 22, 24, 25 at 9:30 p.m.
(after the conclusion of the evening sessions)

Persephone Theatre
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Adults $6
Youth (18 and under) $4
Tickets available at registration

Busing has been arranged from the fieldhouse to the theater and is included in the ticket price.

The article "Status Quo Must Go" (March 13, 1984, issue) and Edwina Sandys' sculpture of Jesus as a woman (May 27 issue) only help to infiltrate the hearts and minds of our readers even more than what radio and TV already have done. Some of it would be better weeded out before going to the printers, and the paper would be that much more readable. Thanks for letting me share my differences. *John C. Klassen, Box 665, Morden, MB R0G 1J0*

June 12

I feel compelled to comment on the photograph of "Jesus as a woman" accompanying the article in the May 27 issue of *The Mennonite* entitled "Women Are Coming into Their Own." It appears to me that artist Edwina Sandys has invested her time and talent in creating a piece of sensationalism to gain publicity and attract attention. Our Mennonite publication seems to have given her sacrilege just that. Hopefully this will not oblige our magazine to grant equal notice to some enterprising male sculptor who decides to alter the anatomy of the virgin Mary in retaliation!

Mr. Seibert gives us much background on the past oppression of women and the progress they have made over the years. Ms. Sandys shows us how women extremists undermine the very progress they worked so hard to attain. Perhaps the "overwhelmingly positive response" indicated in the picture's caption parallels that of the response to the emperor's new clothes in the popular children's story. The intended symbolism may have been applauded by the women's liberation movement, but the sculpture itself is such a distortion of biblical fact that it mocks what is sacred and certainly does not deserve the approval of Mennonite Christians. *Shirley Dunkelberger, Box 44, Tafton, PA 18464*

June 14

I was surprised to read in the May 27 issue that the sculpture of Jesus as a woman met with little opposition in New York City. Can it be that the majority of the people who see it are not familiar with the Bible and aren't conscious of any biblical deviation?

The recent May issue was filled with articles that leaned toward the feminist point of view. I have no objection to the women who want to be pastors if they are willing to preach from the Bible. I feel that to weaken the printed word of God to satisfy the feminist point of view by labeling God as an "it" and Jesus as a woman is not true to the Bible, and our faith is weakened when we change the Bible to make one group of people happy. God is our father—Jesus is the son of God. *Betty Sue Voth, 1753 Azalea, Greenville, MS 38701*

June 14

The picture of the sculpture of Jesus on the cross as a woman (May 27 issue) is sacrilegious. The holy Son of God, who shed his blood on the cross for our sins, should not be made the brunt of sexists who want to extol women. The picture was not necessary to enhance the accompanying article. It was revolting and nauseating. *Jeanne H. Boehr, Box 263, North Newton, KS 67117*

June 23

To all readers: It is abundantly clear that many readers were/are offended by the photo of a sculpture (May 27 issue). The last thing we want to do is to hurt people. But we did.

I am sorry about that and apologize for using that photo. Please forgive me my poor judgment in that selection.

Our hope is to share with all people the good news of Jesus as he is revealed to us in the Bible and in our experience. *Bernie Wiebe, editor*

Editorial was poor ending

The conclusion to the May 27 editorial was a disappointing note to an otherwise thought-provoking piece, as well as an excellent series of articles about women (and men) in the church.

No one pretends to deny the obvious biological differences between women and men. The question is, how should a woman's capacity to bear children—certainly a gift from God—affect her life? But along with our biological characteristics we are also intellectual, emotional and spiritual beings. This is

continued on next page

well illustrated in Luke 11:27, 28 when a woman in a crowd says to Jesus, "Happy the womb that bore you and the breasts you sucked!" Jesus responded, "Still happier those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

It is difficult to know just what the editor means by enjoying our differences since he doesn't elaborate. Too often "mutuality" becomes a thinly veiled excuse to enforce traditional sex roles that are rigid and limiting. *Ardie S. Goering, Box 234, Goessel, KS 67053*

June 5

Editor's note: Sorry to "blow it" with my poor ending. You say well what I wanted to say.

Did God give birth?

A male who has given birth (May 27 editorial)? I know of none. However, the Christian church has long insisted on worshiping such . . . God as "He, Him, His, Father, King, Lord"—all male images. That, despite Deuteronomy 32:18, "You forgot the God who gave you birth." So if you insist that God is a male, then you have the answer to your request—yes, a male has given birth. All of which leads me to wonder what the point of your request was? *Emma Richards, 536 East Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148*

June 5

Editor's note: It seems so easy to strive for gender equality that we may go to the other extreme and lose the beauty of complementary creation.

Listen to the Friends

Having followed the continuing discussion of homosexuality in *The Mennonite* and as a Mennonite who has attended the Chapel Hill (N.C.) Friends (Quaker) Meeting for several years, I wish to share the following minute, which was reached by consensus by the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting in April.

"As Friends we believe in a common divinity shared by all and that we are bonded together in the spirit of love. We countenance neither attitudes nor acts which exclude any person or persons from that love or which define any persons as less than equal in their divine worth. Prejudice against any individual or group is a form of violence that Quakers have by long tradition worked to counteract. Prejudice against lesbians and gay men is destructive to the spirit, security and welfare of such persons solely because their sexual adjustment differs from that of the majority. It is our witness as a Quaker community to oppose such expression of violence.

"Every person within the Quaker community should confidently expect and feel complete inclusion in the love, respect and support of the Meeting and should share equally in the life of the Meeting according to her or his talents and interests. Out of our loving concern for those among us and for all who are victims of prejudice, we of the Chapel Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends decry any attitude or practice that supports destructive discrimination. We fully acknowledge that we are one in the Spirit, sharing equally in the divinity in which we all strive to be centered . . ." (condensed version). *Susan K. Reimer, Route 7, Box 215, Durham, NC 27707*

June 5

An alternative resolution

Four congregations have drafted an alternative to the General Board resolution being brought to Saskatoon (see May 27 issue, p. 235).

We commend the report *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life* to our churches for study and propose that as we study we test the following understanding as a conviction to which the Holy Spirit is leading us:

Sexuality is a good and beautiful gift of God, a gift of identity and a way of being in the world as male and female, single and married.

Our understanding of our sexuality is both enlightened and challenged by the Scriptures and by viewpoints of our times. The Scriptures, in their very covenant form, teach us that life is covenant with God and with one another and that all our relationships are to be faithful, loving, life-enhancing and caring, and to repent where we fail to fulfill this vision. Our times challenge us to consider those practices in our culture, definitions of roles, fears and cultural understandings of the Scriptures which may hinder our understandings of ourselves and of God's truth.

Recognizing that sincere Christians have differing views on sexual issues, we covenant to study together, to listen to each other and to discern together so that we may "not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of our minds, that we may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2).

Endorsed by congregational action of the following churches: *Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church; Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan.; Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan.; Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.*

June 5

Ministry to gays and lesbians

I respond to the homophobic editorial (May 13 issue). The author does a great disservice to those dealing with their gay and lesbian feelings by making a "cut-and-dried case" for his opinion.

I agree with many who believe that our God does not expect or require a change of sexual orientation because one differs from the norms of the majority. Most gays and lesbians feel their sexuality is an inherent part of their personhood. Most adjust to life as well as their heterosexual counterparts.

Second, I feel that as gays and lesbians have become more visible, God has opened doors for them when the established church failed to care. One denomination, the Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, has come into existence to serve primarily but not exclusively those of alternate sexual orientation. From its first worship service in October 1968, it has grown to 226 churches in the United States and in a number of foreign countries. I would like to ask the following question of you Mennonites, since I feel you have some valuable teachings sorely needed in this troubled world. Where could your influence have reached if today you had 226 churches for every 12 worshipers in your services the second Sunday of October 1968? *Jim Thomas, 3797 Hope Terrace, Santa Barbara, CA 93110*

June 5

Likes editorial

Praise God! I want to say thank you to the editor and brother Mark Winslow for the editorial "Healing for Modern-Day Lepers" in the May 13 issue. That is about the best, most precise and soundest article that I have read on this crucial issue that we are struggling with. Thank you, brother Mark, for saying it so well. God bless you. *Peter E. Funk, pastor at Pleasant Hill Mennonite Church, 111 Witney Ave. N, Saskatoon, SK S7L 3M1*

June 6

Disappointed in editorial

What a disappointment to read Mark Winslow's editorial, "Healing for Modern-Day Lepers" (May 13 issue).

Foremost of Mr. Winslow's inaccuracies is the contention that all homosexuals can be—or want to be—changed into heterosexuals. Winslow's claims of success for the so-called "Homosexuals Anonymous" should be investigated before being taken seriously.

The cruel assertion that homosexuality is the result of "psychological and relational needs," as Winslow states, can only be the product of a profound ignorance of psychology, sexuality and personal experience.

Let's commit ourselves to avoid being swayed by the narrow-minded expectations of our society, and instead rely upon prayer and personal study of the whole of the written Word. We may discover anew what Jesus meant when he asked, "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"

The Mennonite can do better than its May 13 editorial. At the very least it should publish the address of the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns, Box 24060, Washington, DC 20024, which engages in honest dialogue and support. *Paul C. Nickell, 950 S.W. 21st Ave., #317, Portland, OR 97205*

June 10

My brother and I

I strongly protest Mark Winslow's editorial (May 13 issue) and the General Board's proposed resolution on sexuality (May 27 issue).

I've worked through four intensive Bible studies on sexuality in the past two years and have come to understand that the Bible is not in any way speaking to the subject of monogamous same-sex relationships. This is important in understanding homosexuality.

It was also valuable for me to again review the large body of material speaking to the marriage covenant. This is an area where Christian heterosexuals have an abominable record.

I have a husband and two little children, and we live in a small (mostly Mennonite) community in the Midwest. I also have a brother who is homosexual and whom I respect and love.

His homosexuality is probably the least interesting part of him as well as the least noticeable. His talent and creativity are outstanding. He is valued and respected by members of his profession. He attends church and on many levels is more spiritual than I.

There is a lot to be learned from listening to homosexuals tell their stories. We don't like to do that as a church body. I was surprised to learn how many Mennonite homosexuals are living quiet lives in these small Mennonite communities. Some are even married to persons of the opposite sex. I was surprised at my brother's answer to my question, "How long have you known you are homosexual?" He said, "Probably as long as you have known you are heterosexual."

With the proposed resolution we will have a neat, clean way of pointing fingers, taking a vote and putting this whole matter behind us where it seems less troublesome.

When the triennial session is over we will still have Mennonite family members who can't talk to each other, who are misinformed and who feel isolated and don't realize how many others share the same issue in their lives. We will still have gay people for whom "healing" means longed-for understanding and acceptance from their families. We will still be discounting the gifts of a large number of our people for whom life has often been a lonely struggle.

I think we could have done better. *Anonymous by request*

June 16

Appreciate letter

We express appreciation to Lynn Keenan for the excellent letter (June 10 issue) expressing a view we also hold. It is good to know there are those in the GC Church whose acceptance is not based on sexual orientation. *Ruth and Willard Linscheid, Goessel, KS 67053*

June 17

Editorial an insult

Your editorial "Women in Our Churches" (May 27 issue) was a disappointment.

First, there are some glaring errors. There were women from the start, not "almost from the start." Was the creation of humanity, male and female, an "almost" creation? And the earliest stories collected in the Old Testament *name* women, something we should note as being revolutionary.

Also, the General Board does not have, nor has ever had, 50 percent women. However, the executive committee of the General Board achieved parity in 1985 with three men and three women.

Finally, you intend to "start the discussion" with a challenge that you will listen to anyone who suggests there should be no male/female distinctions "if you can show me a man who has given birth." Is a woman who has not given birth a woman? Is the qualification for leadership based on reproduction?

Understanding male-female differences is to understand that masculine-feminine characteristics and male-female roles are complex and culture-bound. No one is denying the existence of such characteristics that make up the human person. But the existence of those characteristics comes in varying degrees and prominence depending on social context, psychological factors, intellectual development, as well as biological equipment. Please do not throw us back to a "biology is destiny" mandate in your call for discussion.

To have no challenge in your editorial to women, specifically to hear God's call and to follow it, is disappointing. To entitle your piece "Women in Our Churches" and then not to mention what women are doing in our churches is an insult. To intimate that you are calling for a beginning of the discussion indicates how much you have missed the discussion that has been going on intensely for the last 15 years. *Richard and Dorothy Nickel Friesen, 220 S. Eighth, Manhattan, KS 66502*

June 18

About letters: *To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues, we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations.* Editor

What does church membership mean?

Arnold Roth

A chairperson of a local congregation, who had become a Mennonite after growing up in another denomination, made this comment: "When I joined this Mennonite church, everyone knew what it meant to be a Mennonite. Now it is as though the river is flowing out into a delta; we are spread out all over the place. No one really knows what it means to be a member of this congregation."

This congregational leader was pointing to a central task of leadership: *managing meaning.* To manage meaning, leaders oversee the traditions, beliefs and visions that give the congregation its meaning for leaders, members and the community in which it exists. This oversight focuses one meaning that can be communicated to all interested people and groups.

Traditionally groups form around a central vision of an early leader or leaders. Their vision identifies what it means to be a member of the group. However, as time passes, new people join the group, bringing a new mix of ideas and needs. Norms and expectations in the larger society change with consequent changes in the way the group is viewed and views itself. But during such changes, the central vision often does not change.

Prior to World War II, Mennonite communities were predominantly ethnic Low German and Pennsylvania Dutch groups. They saw themselves as different from the larger society. They were interested in living a practical Christianity throughout the week, and they were opposed to war. (The purpose here is not to evaluate that meaning or even to argue its accuracy.)

Civilian Public Service (CO service) scattered the young men of those communities into all kinds of settings. Some wives and girlfriends went along. A vision for service in the wider society challenged the "normal" prospect of remaining in the agricultural communities from which these people had come. Education in colleges, often the church colleges, opened the way to professions and encouraged service through these professions. A welcome in the larger society made people feel less separate from that society. Many of the Mennonite communities became more open to people from the outside. A generation—now in its 50s and 60s—began to acculturate.

What does it really mean to be a member of the local church?

Their children during the 1960s and early '70s went much further in becoming a part of the larger society. It was a time of mistrusting the establishment institutions and leadership. The church encouraged people to scatter in mission and often failed to follow with any support. Now these people are raising families, often without really settling some of the feelings from those turbulent antiestablishment days.

The economy of these years was a rapidly expanding one that invited larger programs in the church and more personal wealth in the lives of church members. It was a bubble, and the whole society is again asking which programs will survive. Many young people are asking why it was so easy for their parents to own a house and property, and so difficult for them. Segments of the population, especially in agriculture and heavy industry, are asking what happened to that way of life and security of which they were so recently a part.

These are some of the events that make Mennonite congregations begin to ask what it means to be a member of the congregation. These are some of the events that call out for leaders who will manage meaning.

Groups need to develop and articulate a central mission by facing up to a series of hard questions in an attitude of openness, repentance and prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Who are we? Why do we exist? Whom do we serve? Do we have any criteria for measuring alternate answers to the questions above? In these past 50 years Mennonite congregations have become diverse enough that one central answer to these questions will not fit. Most congregations will have to participate in a process to develop their own answers, their own meaning. Most will need the help of someone from outside the group to provide help, courage and objectivity.

These 50 years have seen the development of a number of exciting theological ideas: a membership gifted by the Holy Spirit for ministry; servant leadership, based on integrity and trust, helping to define mission and to enable every member to serve; a body where barriers are broken down, people are made whole and strong, and the fellowship includes a great diversity of people. These may become building blocks for the new meaning that will emerge if people seek meaning.

But it will happen only as congregations take responsibility for defining what it means to be members of the local congregation. Only if the church again becomes a river with direction and banks to discipline the flow will there be power and strength.

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Working on your heritage

Janeen Bertsche Johnson

A heritage is a tradition transmitted by or acquired from a predecessor. This legacy includes information, beliefs and values, customs and practices, and stories. As a religious heritage, Christianity embraces the story of God's people since Abraham, and it focuses uniquely on Jesus Christ as the central figure in the ongoing story.

Few of us appreciate our religious heritage as we should. We tend to take it for granted, when we should instead be concerned with preserving it and keeping it faithful to Jesus.

I propose that three things are required in order to preserve a Christian heritage: hindsight, insight and foresight. *Hindsight* is retrospect or the perception of the nature and demands of an event after it has happened. *Insight* is the act or result of grasping the inner nature of things or of seeing intuitively. *Foresight* is the act of looking forward, of seeing ahead. All three are related, and they affect each other.

Hindsight involves reminiscence or thinking about past experiences. It is remembering the past, both in the sense of bringing it to mind and of keeping it in mind. In relating this history we tell stories and we affirm the religious meaning of those stories.

Since ancient times the Hebrews recognized the value of recounting the past to preserve their heritage. "Remember" is a word used generously in the Old Testament. Several times in Deuteronomy one finds the command, "Remember that you were a slave in Egypt." Psalms 78 and 105 are other examples of the reminiscence of the Israelites, who recited the history of their pilgrimage with God to strengthen their faith and to define who they were as a people.

For us as Christians, worship functions as a corporate form of reminiscence. We tell the stories of the people of God and affirm the significance of the past for today. We especially focus on the stories of Jesus and his followers, and we can see how the heritage of Jesus was carried on past the early church and up to this time. Once we know the stories of our heritage, we can begin the process of discovering the meaning of the past for the present, the process I am calling insight.

We need to understand that the stories we tell and identify with determine the shape and meaning of our faith. For Christians the biblical narratives should serve as our framework to interpret the world. The most important of these narratives is the story of Jesus, which we must allow to shape all of our life and thought.

Insight means that we try to discern the meaning of the biblical stories for our lives. To identify with the narratives and become part of the ongoing story of the people of God, we must discover how to follow Jesus' example. Becoming religious is a continual process of growing, which can be compared to learning a language. Just as a person becomes human by learning how to speak a language, so he or she begins to become a Christian (or as Paul states, a new creature) by hearing and taking as his or her own the language that speaks of Christ. In other words, we are called to be imitators of Christ and to share or participate in his hopes, his concerns, his suffering and death, and in his triumph over death. We share in Christ's heritage.

The final task in preserving a heritage is **foresight**. We look at the stories of our past, understand their meaning and significance for the present and then see the direction for our future. Without a vision for the future a heritage cannot survive. The goal of the Christian heritage is to make evident the kingdom of God on earth. The foundation of this kingdom, Christ, has been laid, and we are called to build on the foundation of Christ, not of the world. We evaluate the faithfulness of a tradition, not by seeing how the world responds to it but by comparing it to Jesus. Unfortunately our beliefs and our behavior often fail to line up with the example given to us. For instance, Jesus taught that we are to love our enemies and be peacemakers. In his life and his death, Jesus showed God's way to confront evil in the world was through non-violence and self-giving love. All Christians should take Jesus' example of non-violence seriously. At the point that a person says it is all right to hate the enemy and kill, he or she is more concerned with preserving the heritage of his or her nation than with preserving the heritage of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has given to us the ministry of reconciling men and women to God and to each other. This is the heritage we are called to live and to preserve. The heritage of Jesus never fits the molds the world would like to give it, for it is based on different, often directly opposed, values. Foresight means realigning our lives with Christ and trusting his guidance, so that we give ultimate importance in our thought and action to the heritage of Jesus, rather than to the values of the world.

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The bread and the cup are part of the heritage Jesus urged believers to observe around the world. They serve to keep us united around our center—Jesus Christ.

They are leaving our church

Calvin Redekop

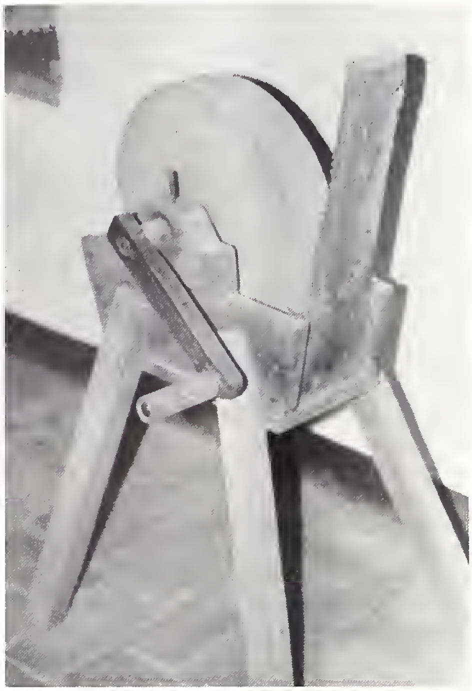
It was one of those delightful dinners with friends. As we discussed mutual interests and friends, Dwight said, "Too bad about Bryan." "What happened?" I asked. "Didn't you hear? Bryan and his family recently left Mennoville (all names are changed) and went to the Presbyterian church." The shock and disappointment left me with a somber feeling for the remainder of the evening. No amount of analysis seemed to satisfy. Bryan was an owner of a successful business, a Mennonite college graduate and a strong contributor to church causes.

It is always painful to lose a friend and colleague. And it seems the Mennonite church has historically lost a high percentage of its members. My family genealogy, just completed, shows about two-thirds of my ancestors left the Mennonite church. That figure is probably close to being representative of all Mennonite families.

Bryan was a *business* person, and I want to address a specific and painful problem: the loss of many professional and business members from the Mennonite church. This has been and continues to be a substantial phenomenon. On a recent trip I interviewed Mennonite entrepreneurs in five provinces of Canada and numerous states in the United States. In every community I was informed that "Henry left the Mennonite church and joined the Missionary Alliance," or "Mr. John __________ still considers himself a Mennonite, but he is attending the Baptist church in town."

Let me first dispense with the objections that could be raised to make this an irrelevant issue: (1) Joining another denomination does not mean apostasy; on the contrary, there is no denomination which can claim a monopoly on guaranteed eternal bliss. (2) There should be freedom for individuals to leave or join any denomination or congregation, although these choices cannot be totally individualistic. (3) There are often good reasons why a person/family should not leave the congregation or church.

What is going on when professional and business people leave the church? What can and should be done about it?



Is the church's attitude to business and professional people simply in need of a "sharpening"?

I believe the rate of professional and business people leaving the Mennonite church for other religious groups is especially high. Why is this so?

I propose or postulate that the number of people leaving the Mennonite church is increasing, basically because the number of people involved in professional, business and industrial activities, is increasing. (See Michael Yoder, "The 1982 Mennonite Census," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, October 1985).

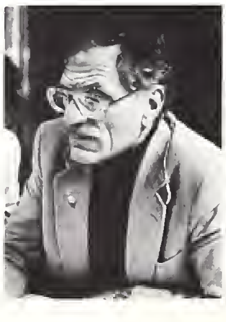
Secondly, more Mennonite professionals and business people leave their congregations/denomination than those of other denominations because the Mennonite church historically has a unique economic stance or ethic, which I call a "communal ethic." Mennonites have developed a more stringent understanding of business and professional activities, relationships, objectives and values than have other traditions. Lifestyle, for example, has been stressed to include simplicity, frugality, mutual aid, modesty and self-denial.

As Mennonite professional and business people have become more aggressively involved in their respective institutions, the tensions and strains have grown to the point where relationships have become intolerable. It is at this breaking point that a variety of "ostensible" reasons are given for the disassociation from the church—sometimes personality clashes, other times family matters. In the case introduced at the beginning, my friend had heard that "the children no longer felt at home in the Mennonite youth fellowship."

Thirdly, it is not entirely the professional or business person's lack of faithfulness. Rather, the Mennonite church has not yet made the transition from understanding its economic ethic as a rural ethic to one which can and will have to include a modern industrial-rural system. In innumerable cases the professional or business person has had sufficient reasons for becoming alienated and leaving the church. Being successful in business does not mean the person has been a crook or is completely motivated by selfish and aggressive drives.

I am not implying that the church's ethic is outdated or wrong. I am proposing there is much misunderstanding of the professional, business world and a misunderstanding of what being faithful in the marketplace really entails. For example, profit is a necessity, and "excess profits" and capital accrued needs to be couched in the context of requirements to operate from one day to the next.

This is a big topic and deserves widespread discussion. The future of the Mennonite church depends to some extent on how well it understands, integrates and uses its professional and business people. I mean the insight, advice, inspiration and perspective these people can give to our church communities.



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MEDITATION

He comes again

Eight years had passed since those days of pain.
"Healing comes with time," they say,
But be that as it may,
painful memories remained—
feelings of fear, anger, inadequacy, failure, guilt,
And yet profound sadness was the main material of which my house of pain was built.
Every time, in my mind's eye, when I turned back the clock,
I saw a shepherd who had disappointed the flock.
Sorrow reigned, tears rained, with every reminder.

And then she came (or was it She?)
One Holy Spirited person came to me.
O yes, God did not give her a spirit of timidity,
but a spirit of power, love and self-control.
And yet, bold as she was, empowered as she was, able to love as she was, disciplined to reach out as she was, there was suffering in her soul—
A flicker of fear in her eyes, a hint of hesitation in her voice, a crisis of confidence betrayed in her face,
She was not exactly "on a roll" . . .
but her countenance bespoke humility, truth and grace.
"Doug."
(So much care in the way she spoke my name; evocative of "Mary" in that garden where the Risen Lord came.)
She now referred to those days of pain:
"I misunderstood you, I now *realize.*"
(What I also heard was, "I now see you with *real eyes.*")
"I know you were just trying to lead us to the truth, humbly and gently;
You weren't trying to force anything on us, just sharing your own understanding, honestly and openly."
("Amazing grace! how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!")
"Will you forgive me?" asked she. (Dumbfounded was I, momentarily; and then I embraced her and said, "Certainly.")
Joy reigned, tears rained, new creation tears, washing away sorrow, bringing healing;
new creation tears, cleansing my eyes, revealing.

"Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations but is now disclosed to the saints . . . Christ in you, the hope of glory."

"Through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."

One woman's suffering on behalf of the church—giving herself up, cleansing me by the washing with water through her words punctuating the Word.
One woman's commitment to bring the new message of God's love to me, a message hidden for years by feelings of pain but now disclosed to one hurting saint.
One woman's act of humble service, laying down her life.
One woman's obedience, restoring my brokenness with many.
Christ's ambassador, bringing the message of reconciliation.

A mini-atonement. A maxi-at-one-ment.
"May they be one," is no longer just a maybe for me.
Now I feel no longer in hock; love canceled the debt, I can better shepherd the flock.
Thank you, Lord, for your Son, Jesus, my elder brother, whom you have sent; thank you, Lord God, for your daughter, my sister and friend, whom you have sent.
I live because he came; I am enlivened anew because she came.
Come, Lord Jesus. Holy Spirit, come.

Doug Reichenbach is pastor at the Wayland Mennonite Church, Wayland, IA 52654.

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As summer comes upon us, it is easy to become preoccupied. Some focus all their energies on vacations, others on the coming conferences.

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EDITORIAL

Moses Older and Joe Younger go to conference

"Moses, you never told me you were going."

"Hello, Joe, yahh, I vas never sure I'd be able to go. Many people my age are already gone to the Great Conference. But the Lord let me come once more."

"How did you come? I didn't see you on the jet."

"Joe, if the Lord wanted me to fly, I'd have wings. Our '80 Ford still did OK. Only one flat and one oil change!"

"But that's 1,500 miles (2,400 km)!"

"Joe, I believe the Lord has sent us to Saskatoon to finally see his will on this sex-business. Our conference must stand firm and not be moved by every wind. Have you and your church thought on that?"

"Oh, yeah, an interest group studied the human sexuality book. They brought in doctors, a psychiatrist, a nurse and a counselor from the crisis center."

"Joe, our church did that study too. Can't say I'd thought of doctors and those people from elsewhere. Never think of them as 'special.' We worked at it together."

"Moses, you Olders better realize we have become a 'professional' people. Take me, I'm a consultant for public relations."

"Yahh, Joe, the world, she is changing. That Challenger explosion, the bombing in Libya and the nuclear accident in Chernobyl are signs to be more humble. People make mistakes. God is in control. Jesus' Second Coming may be near."

"Moses, I agree. Armageddon's shadow is over the world. And we are caught up in homosexuality, abortion and AIDS. It makes no sense. Our conference needs to stand on the Bible's clear answers."

"You know vat, Joe? Our church did not write a statement. We took most of our last evening for prayer. Our delegates were told to speak and vote as the Spirit leads us."

"Great, Moses, then you'll vote with us. When our statement was read, I knew the next step. Made a motion to cut everything except what the Bible says. You know—Leviticus 18, 20; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Got a big majority!"

"Joe, did you study the whole Bible?"

"C'mon, Moses, you know I'm a busy man. So are our people. We Youngers took a good look at the verses that count. The Bible is *very* clear on this."

"Joe, it's true some of us Olders have more time. But we studied more than just the usual texts in the Bible for several other reasons: (1) It seemed to us that if the answers were so simple, then Christians would not be so divided. (2) We know sexuality is important. The Bible mentions it—and in a beautifully appreciative way—already in Genesis 2. (3) Even in our church we learned that some of our people have struggled with homosexual orientation and/or experiences personally or in family and among friends."

"Moses, in your church? I can't imagine it. That's downtown stuff. Nobody in our church is gay, that's sure. You can always tell. Wouldn't have them in church if they were. They're dangerous for our kids."

"Joe, we Olders learned again that God chose to create people male and female. God also created a world for people to occupy in harmony. Sin—the Fall—came. That was not God's wish. Now we all are sinners, imperfect creatures depending on God's grace for our salvation. That great *key verse*—John 3:16—says it all for me."

"What are you telling me for, Moses? It's clear—clean and simple. All who repent of their sins and believe, will not perish but have everlasting life."

"Joe, you know I was in the army—artillery. One day after I'd shot one of the *enemy* in Korea, something fell out of that soldier's pocket. I picked it up. It was a family photo—in a Korean church. The man was holding a Bible . . . like mine. That changed my life. You know I got divorced in the process. But now I have a new family and you treat me as one of you."

"Moses, that's past, done, forgiven and forgotten. Everybody knows you are a 'salt of the earth' Christian—and Mennonite to boot. That's not what Saskatoon '86 is about."

"Joe, I wonder if it might be more about you and me than we know. Our church's study taught me much about God's neverending concern to save people from sins.

"You know vat, Joe? I'm so glad about vat God has done for me, I'm planning to vote in favor of the Multi-Conference Fund Drive. I believe it's time to trust the Lord and enlarge our working together for his kingdom." *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST
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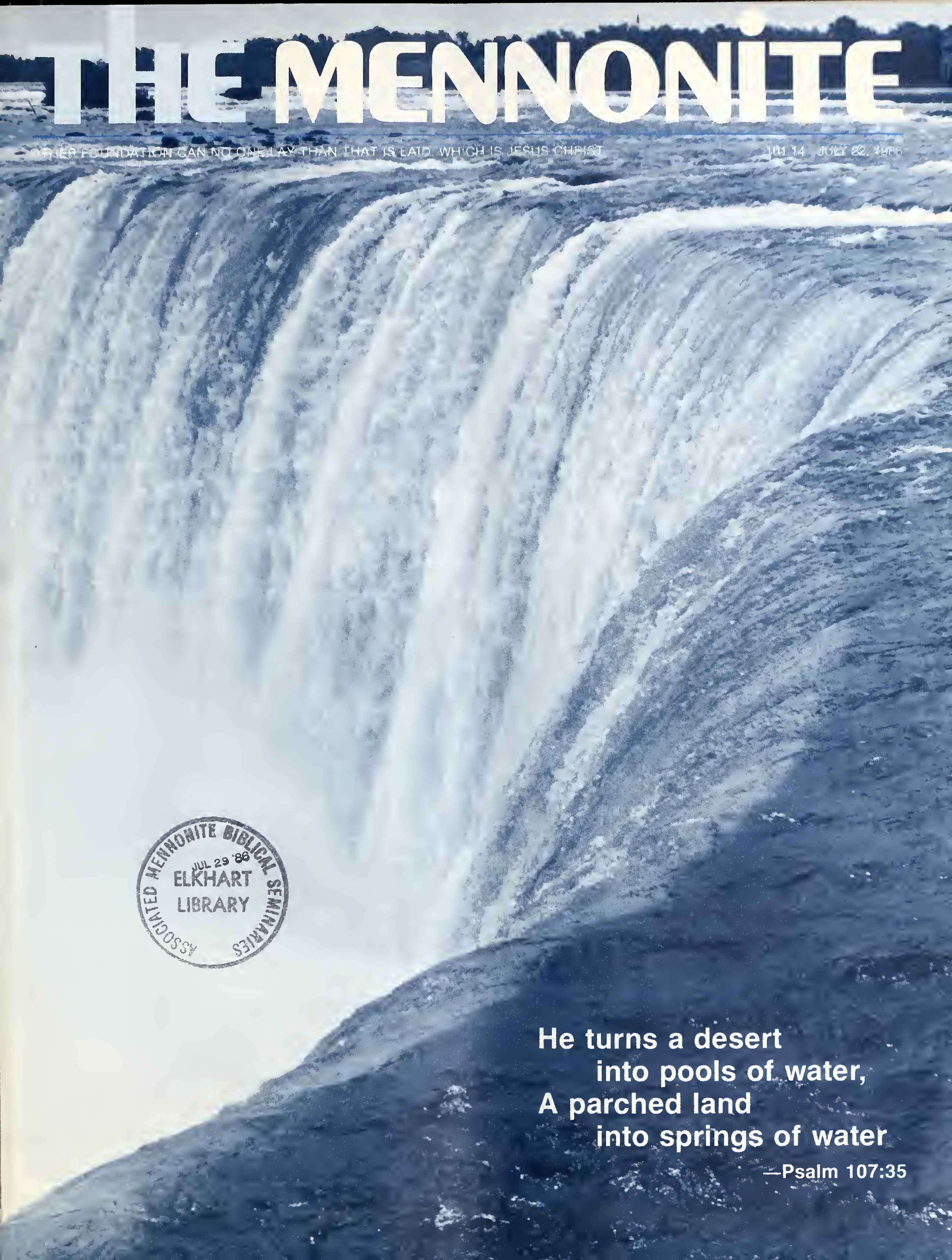

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He turns a desert
into pools of water,
A parched land
into springs of water
—Psalm 107:35

Seeking wholeness in the church

Ron Ropp

Since that day 18 years ago when a doctor said to me, a young pastor, "It looks to me like you have an ulcer, Ron," the issue of wholeness has been a personal pilgrimage, not just an academic question.

I was reared in a Mennonite home with a mother who was called "Doc" by all the neighbors because her skills as a nurse were widely used in the community. As a farm boy, I knew firsthand how nature seeks to balance itself and that often pain is part of that process.

But as a young pastor I had avoided dealing with the balance of my own physical, emotional and spiritual health. Although I felt good about my pastoral ministry, I decided to enter into further study of behavioral sciences to understand better ways to help people.

But I also needed to help myself know what it meant to love God with heart (emotional), soul (spiritual), mind (mental) and strength (physical being). That pilgrimage developed into a doctoral program in pastoral counseling, during which I learned much about myself and the dynamics of wholeness. Searching for a way to practice what I had learned, I came to the chaplaincy program at Mennonite Hospital in Bloomington, Ill., where issues of wholeness and healing are more than academic and theoretical questions debated in a psychology class or Sunday school.

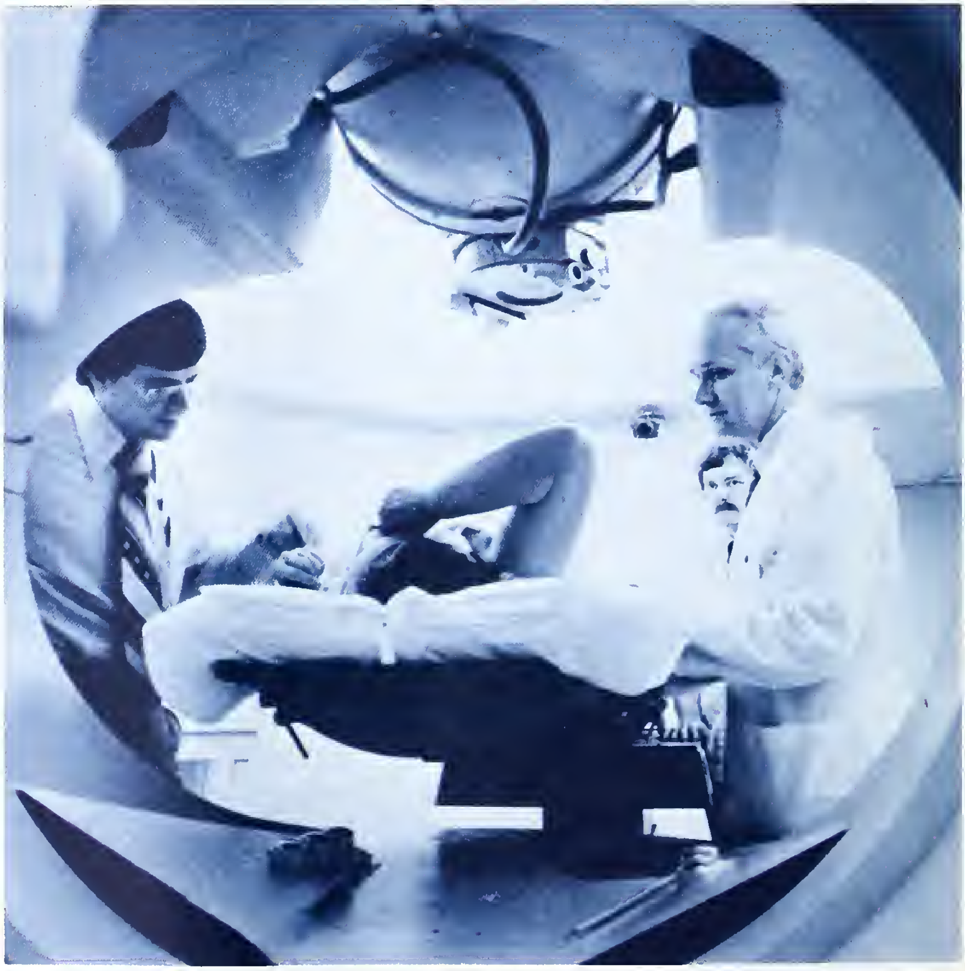
In this ministry I was confronted by the intense efforts of people to find healing and wholeness. They were determined to use modern science to find a solution to all the hurts of the human condition. Although I had significant training to walk alongside them in the health-care team, I was not prepared for the struggle to include faith and values as a valid form of treatment in people's quest for a cure.

Fortunately the times were few when I was confronted by a physician or questioned by a nurse as to my intent or my contribution to the health team. But also few were the times that doctors or nurses wrote orders on the chart for the pastoral-care needs of patients. Spiritual-emotional needs had no credibility as an illness, it seemed, when a patient would share in pitiful tones, "The doctor says there is nothing wrong with me. It's all in my head."

I found there were others, though—physicians and other staff—with a sense of concern for the spiritual-emotional well-being of patients. There were also dedicated Christian administrators concerned about finding a better way to integrate the healing forces of medicine and religion.

Together we worked to establish an innovative model of health care where physicians, psychiatrists and pastoral counselors worked together with support staff to create a "wholistic health center." This model drew together two physicians, a part-time psychiatrist and a pastoral counselor. We operated

A student chaplain calls upon a patient in a hospital. To make studies "real," it is often necessary to try them out in the actual experiences of people.



When people are ill, it affects body, soul, mind and emotions. To become well they often need help in all of these areas. We need to recognize that fact.

in a remodeled grocery store. It linked specialists in mental, spiritual, emotional and physical care to work together as a team to treat whole persons—not just their "illnesses." The team was prepared to focus upon all the dimensions affected in a person's life, not just the area in which the symtoms occurred.

Initially there was some question about this model. Some wondered why medical people would align themselves with "ministers" and whether this did not bias their thinking. Others in the church wondered why they should pay for pastoral counseling when pastors counsel for free.

However, the concept was not only accepted by most but was used heavily by churched and unchurched people alike. And it continues to grow each year, 10 to 20 percent over each preceding year. By 1981 we created a separate pastoral service organization, known as the Illinois Pastoral Services Institute. With the size and quality of staff, it was possible to develop training programs both in pastoral care and pastoral counseling.

Successful? Yes, you may say that this is the story of success. One could say the present budget of over $600,000 for pastoral and educational services indicates success and that providing tens of thousands of hours of counseling and chaplaincy services indicates success.

However, as a Mennonite pastor I still struggle on my pilgrimage with wholeness at several levels, both new and ongoing. First, I struggle on a personal level to find the grace and the wisdom to integrate within myself what I share with others as a ministry of wholeness. The effort to balance within my life the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions and to nurture those effectively in the context of fellowship and close relationships is still not easy for me.

The second level of my continuing pilgrimage toward wholeness is from a pastoral and professional point of view. I long to see the Mennonite church integrate behavioral science insights and pastoral ministry so that pastors will add healing skills to their skills as preachers and teachers. I also long to see greater effort in our Mennonite mental health systems to bring pastoral roles in ministry to spiritual and emotional needs in those systems.

The third area for which I yearn in the pilgrimage toward wholeness is for the church as a body of believers to take ownership of its tremendous potential as the true healing community that I believe God intended it to be. It is my belief that the congregation can become the answer to many of the present dilemmas in health care. The local congregation has potential to rescue the health-care scene from becoming a giant millstone around the neck of society and of a people searching for wholeness and salvation in physical form.

The church represents the foundation of "prevention," which must become the first line of defense against illness. But the church also represents the caring context of committed people who offer relationships that are essential to wholeness. I have a vision for the church becoming a health center where not only education but actual health-related services and activities become part of its ministries to the community within and beyond its membership. I see this as a step in renewing the church's mandate to healing along with our more commonly accepted roles of preaching and teaching.

God has truly been gracious in allowing me to personally and professionally experience wholeness in the context of many caring people, including my family, my fellow workers and the body of believers—the church. My vision remains incomplete, but it is still the driving force for the pilgrimage that lies ahead, a pilgrimage to fulfill the calling of Christ to a ministry of healing and wholeness.

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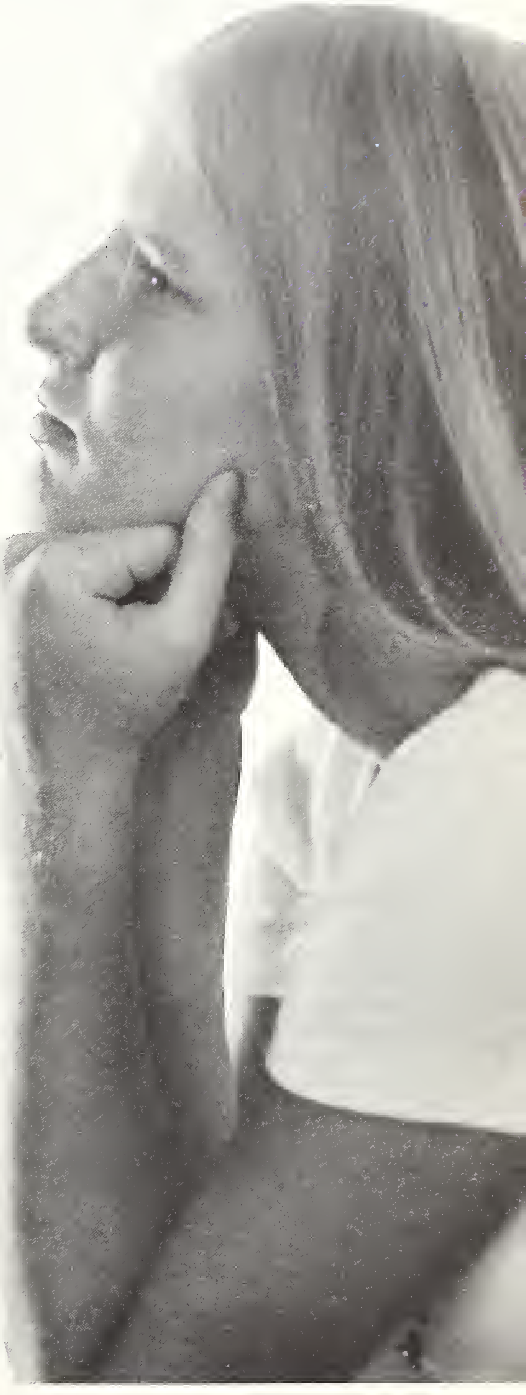

The church as healing agent

James E. Kipp

In the beginning was Religion,
and one of the purposes of Religion was to heal.
Through the course of centuries it came to pass
that healing by the priests of Religion was given over to healing by the physicians of Medicine.
Thus did a new Religion arise: the Medical Religion.
Some of its practitioners specialized in the body and its organs,
Others specialized in the mind and its proper working.
As for the priests of the old Religion, their ministry of
healing was replaced by a ministry of consolation in sickness and preparation for death.
In these latter days, voices have been heard
in the land crying:
"Cannot Religion go beyond consolation?
Is there not more than that for Religion to do in health care?"
(John Pilch, *Wellness*)

Patient and doctor. I stood by my patient in the intensive care unit of the medical center. I looked at her and saw the frail form of one I knew and loved. Here lay my patient. But here too lay my friend, my adviser, my children's Sunday school teacher. We had eaten together at church dinners and had visited in each other's homes. She came to my office to see me as her family doctor. I went to see her in her home to admire her creative power in painted eggs and artistic floral designs.

Here lay my patient. She was a frail form lying on a mechanized bed which could move her dying body into all conceivable positions. Around the bed of wonder stood wonderful machines. From their forms came arms of plastic tubing that embraced my friend with technological love. They entered her veins, arteries, bladder and nose. They gave to her. They took from her. They nourished, measured and sustained. Twentieth-century ministrations of love came from the surroundings of my patient. Hyperalimentation fluid, chemotherapy and vital-sign monitoring helped her go on living.

I stood there looking at my patient while she slept in the bed of wonder and felt overwhelmed. As a 20th-century physician, I was a medical scientist who had been trained and expected to use all the latest and most sophisticated technology available today. As a scientist, I understood what was going on in that intensive-care room. I knew what these lights and numbers meant. I understood the writing on the I.V. solution. I comprehended the lines on the vital signs chart at the foot of the bed. But what did these have to do with my

When people come for healing they often don't know what all they need. But one thing is clear; they usually need more than just a 10-minute interview and a prescription for pills.

dying patient and my relationship to her?

I realized that the technology in the scene before me might separate me from my friend. I did not want that to happen. I was the caregiver who used these tools to help my patients return to physical wholeness. I could not blame technology for its excesses. I was in control. I was the dispenser of these medical wonders.

It was clear to me that there was something incomplete in the relationship with my patient. I felt put off by the tubes and appliances. I felt a gulf between her and me. I think I was awed by the technology I dispensed. I was tempted to hide my emotions behind my machines. It would have been safer for me that way. I would have expended less energy if I had kept my white coat wrapped tightly around me and had kept my stethoscope at the proper angle of dangle.

But I did not want to be aloof from the woman before me. I did not really want to be safe from the pain I knew would come to me if I shared her pain.

I touched my friend with my hands, face and voice. I was with her in her brokenness. I gave of my feelings to her and she gave of hers to me. We shared our mutual brokenness. We received from each other. We moved together in our encounter, not as physician and patient but as two friends caring for each other. As we talked and touched, the tubes and apparatuses became less threatening. They became aids to our relationship. They moved into proper perspective within the healing context.

Wholeness did come to that room of technology. It came in the form of the anointing service of the community of faith. Wholeness came to all who gathered there—the patient, her family, her minister and her physician. The minister and I laid on hands. The church, the medical establishment, the family and the patient prayed together for wholeness in the midst of brokenness. And wholeness came and stayed with all who were there. It came even to those not in the room at the time. A transcendent wholeness came to the mecca of medical technology and encompassed those who prayed, those who listened and those who had sent their healing representatives of the church. Death came. But that was now a completion of the wholeness begun much earlier.

A nurse ***taking*** *a patient's* ***blood pressure*** *is usually doing much more than she is aware of. She shows her attitude about herself, a patient and a lot of other things without saying so in words.*

The scene above is a true one. It has happened repeatedly in variations on the same scenario with other physicians. It is my hope that wholeness can be a gift of the faith community to its members as well as an expectation from the medical community.

Wholeness is a concept I've been struggling with for about six years. I was introduced to it, not by the writings of Granger Westburg but by hearing Dave Hilton speak about his view of health and healing as gleaned from the conversation of an American Indian medicine man. This Navajo healer said that the American Indian sees a person as one unit—body, mind and spirit, with the Great Spirit seated in the center. Illness comes when any part—body, mind or spirit—is broken. Illness also comes when the relationship between these is disrupted. Healing and health come when the person is restored to one functioning unit in a right relationship with the Creator. This is wholeness.

Jesus' ministry of healing demonstrated his belief that a person with a sick body, mind or spirit could not be healed without re-establishing a different, more wholesome relationship to God. His acts of healing were acts of offering salvation to the total person. In the story of the healing of the paralytic we can see this clearly: *Some men brought him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." At this, some of the teachers of the Law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!" Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?" (Matthew 9:2-5* NIV).

This paralytic was healed. He was made whole again.

A right relationship with God was established within him. His body, mind and spirit again functioned as one unit. He was saved. He was made whole.

Church and medicine. In the last 100 years the church has abdicated and Western medicine has willingly assumed the healing prerogative. The church has too easily given up its healing function. It has been cowed by technology, by Freud, by the palaces of sciences and by its own loss of what healing means.

I believe strongly that the church and the medical profession are in the same business. I have felt this way for a long time, but I have had difficulty defining why I feel this way. In recent months it has become clearer to me.

I grew up in the church. Since my father was a Brethren pastor, I was exposed early to his role as a minister to the ill. I grew up listening to his prayers for restoration of wholeness. "Not my will but thine be done," he would say. Every Sunday his pastoral prayers included intercessory statements for those "afflicted with illness of body and mind." I went with him to give communion to shut-ins. He wanted them to be a part of the community of faith. I sat off to the side as he and a deacon administered the anointing service. I grew up seeing my

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The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

father being comfortable in the presence of the broken of his flock. I grew up believing that the church is important to people when their lives are intruded upon by illness.

But in later years I saw another side of the church's ministry to the sick—a side I do not like. Maybe the health professionals have seen it too.

How many times have you stood on one side of a curtain in the intensive care unit and listened to the prayer of a minister on the other side? Have you heard and have you been disturbed when you heard these prayers which bless the technology surrounding the patient and miss the suffering soul on the bed? Have you heard the prayers which hold up physicians as only slightly below the level of God's shoulder? Have you ever wished to blindfold the ministers who come to visit in the hospital so that they can only touch their sick parishioners and not be dazzled by the technological glitter?

I do not want to be too harsh on ministers, for I too am dazzled by my own technology. I routinely ask the I.C.U. nurses to explain what the latest gizmo ordered by the cardiovascular surgeons is doing to or for my patients.

Today's ministers are exposed to medical technology that is truly mind-boggling. If I am awed by their discussions of differences between Pietism and Anabaptism, why should not they be awed by my tools of the trade?

And this is the crux of the matter, the heart of the discussion: I do not want the ministers of the church nor the healers of medicine to be distracted from the broken one before them. The business of the community of faith is the same as the business of the healing arts—to restore wholeness from brokenness.

Healing. Within the church we are all healers. Within the church we are all in need of healing. Another way to say this is that as professing Christians we are all broken. And we who call ourselves health professionals are wounded healers who do our job best when we recognize our brokenness, confess it to ourselves and to our patients and utilize that mutual bond to touch our patients with compassion. If we do this, our compassion will be returned to us and we, the healers, will be moved toward wholeness along with our patients.

We healers are not immortal. Nor do we hold the keys to immortality. I like how Psalm 90 expresses this: "For 100 years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning. . . . Though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered. . . . The length of our days is 70 years—or 80, if we have the strength: Yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass and we fly away" (vv. 4-6 and 10).

It is important for a blind man reading braille to feel like anyone else—a person who occasionally needs snack breaks.

We cannot give immortality to our patients. We cannot have it for ourselves. However, our tools are powerful in restoring bodies and minds to health. But our healing restores only partially if we use it without sharing our most potent healing resource—our compassion. If we share with those who come to us a sense of identity, our healing power will increase.

Again, in Psalm 90 we hear: "Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (v. 12).

The heart of wisdom which I would like to see come to the church and to health professionals within the church is that they would both see themselves moving in the same direction—to bring wholeness from brokenness. I would like all to see that technology and compassion are not exclusive entities. The church and the health professions are in the same business.

The role of the health professional in the healing process is that of an aid. Wholeness comes from God, not from our ministrations. We in Western culture have trouble remembering this.

In Nigeria, when a village health worker of the Church of the Brethren rural health program heals a person of malaria, that healed person says, "Madala! Naw gaude do Yaweh." (Praise be to God! And thank you, friend.)

The Nigerian, like the American Indian, sees being healed as being restored to a right relationship to the creation and to the Creator. The healer is an agent of God who helps to restore wholeness. So thanksgiving is given first to God, then to the healer.

Church and healing. What can we do to encourage our churches to be agents of healing? Here are some suggestions: (1) As healers within the church, let us help our fellow Christians, both laity and clergy, to be more comfortable with medical technology. When given the opportunity, let us point out that technology is an aid in diagnosis and treatment, not an answer. It is a tool and needs to be used appropriately. (2) In our work as health professionals, let us set good examples by paying attention to the sick who come for help. Let's share our technical expertise in compassionate ways. Let us heal, but let us also be willing to accept healing. (3) Avoid the idolatry of life. It is a subtle idol in the church and in society. It holds forth that life must be maintained at any price. Look for this idol and work to gently destroy it. Be willing to count the cost of dying.

4. Avoid the idolatry of healer worship. Be willing to loosen the robes of professionalism that hold the healer aloof from those who are hurting. Local congregations often venerate the health professionals in their midst. That isolates us from the Christian community and makes us lonely. Veneration of healers is a positive prejudice that can be as painful as a negative one.

5. Look for innovative ways for the church to have a healing ministry. Can biblical studies be initiated to look at Old and New Testament concepts of wholeness? Healing? Shalom? Can church members be made more aware of the anointing service? Does the local congregation want to employ a health professional as a staff person?

All Christians are part of the community of the wounded. We are all broken and we all have access to the glue.

James E. Kipp, M.D., Route 7, Box 264, Manheim, PA 17545, is president of the Brethren Health and Welfare Association. Jim is also a family practitioner with the Norlanco Medical Associates at Elizabethtown. The above article is an adaptation of the address Dr. Kipp gave to a dinner for health professionals at the Church of the Brethren annual conference on July 6, 1985, at Phoenix, Ariz.

Why does a loving God permit evil? —Habakkuk 1:1-4

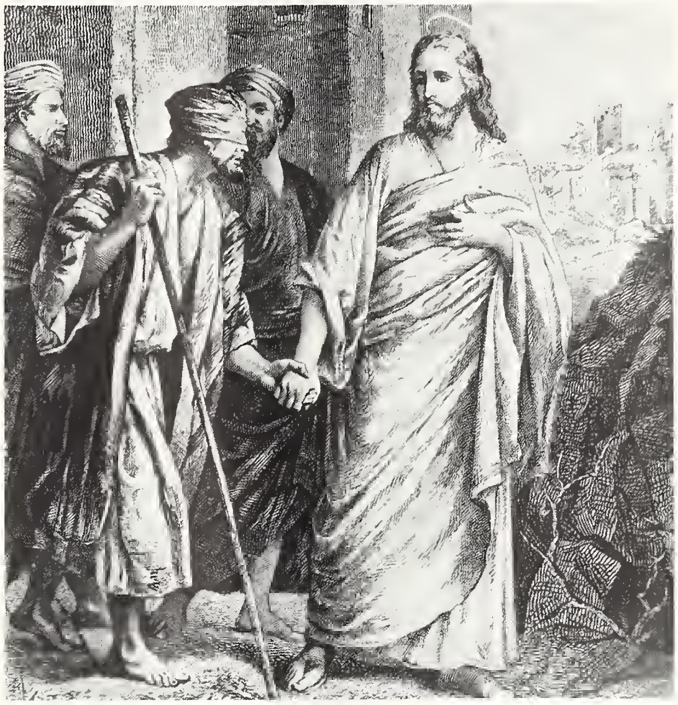
Thomas Finger

Why do many people today find it difficult to accept the Christian faith? Some say the obstacles are intellectual: Educated, scientifically minded people find it difficult to believe in God and in much that's in the Bible. Others say the obstacles are ethical: Modern people don't want to live by Christianity's high standards. But while some people reject Christianity for intellectual or ethical reasons, many do so for a reason that is more emotional: They are disturbed by the reality of evil and suffering.

Modern communications have made the awfulness of evil more vivid than ever before. Gruesome images of hunger in Africa and war in Nicaragua float before our eyes. Whenever and wherever terrorism strikes, we hear of little else for days. And we think of the promising, exemplary teenager killed in an auto crash. We shudder, remembering the loving parent who wasted away slowly with cancer. Taken together, global and personal evil like this arouse the cry in many a heart, "If there is a good and loving God, how can he possibly allow such evil to exist?"

Unfortunately, many Christians, when asking such questions, fear that they are betraying their faith. Who are you and I, after all, to question an all-powerful God? And so, when evil and suffering begin to outrage and break our hearts, we can seek to stifle all upsetting questions, lest we fall prey to unsolvable and unforgivable doubt. Yet should we succeed in stifling all this, we will still harbor deep-seated fears that God is not really loving and good. At worst, confrontation with further evil can wholly destroy our faith.

When Christians and other people come face to face with evil's widespread sway, it is good to know that the Bible deals with such issues in depth. Contrary to much contemporary opinion, the Bible does not impose rose-colored glasses upon reality. Most biblical writers and most of their audiences come from small, relatively powerless communities suffering at the hands of larger forces. The question "Why does God permit evil?" runs throughout Scripture. It is the special theme of many Psalms (cf. Psalms 77, 79, 88, etc.), of Job, of Lamentations and of the small book of Habakkuk.



Yes, Jesus healed the blind man. But why does God allow such blindness in the first place?

Habakkuk writes around 625-600 B.C., not long before the fall of Jerusalem (587). Like his contemporary, Jeremiah, Habakkuk is deeply distressed by the upsurge of idolatry, immorality and injustice in his native land. As he looks around him, he complains that "destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise" (Habakkuk 1:3).

In fact, this increase of evil is sorely testing his faith. Habakkuk has always believed God is a God of justice. Yet day after day "the law is slacked, and justice never goes forth" (1:4). Habakkuk has always believed that no matter how bad things get, God will protect "the righteous." Quite likely he counts himself, some fellow prophets and their small circle of adherents among "the righteous." Yet even they are in peril, for "the wicked surround the righteous" (1:4).

As Habakkuk's "oracle" opens, we learn that he has been agonizing over this situation for some time. The prayer with which he begins is hardly the first he has raised. In fact, Habakkuk's opening prayer is a complaint that his previous prayers seem to have gone unheard.

"O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and thou wilt not hear? Or cry to thee, 'Violence!' and thou wilt not save?" (1:2).

As we begin studying this book, let us pause and seek to sense what Habakkuk must have felt. Here is a person whose world has become terribly confused. Here is a man who painfully, helplessly watches evil overwhelm all that he calls holy and good. Here is someone who has always turned to God in times of perplexity, yet who now finds that God seems to be deaf. Here, surely, is a person who is squarely and uncompromisingly raising the question, "Why does a loving God permit evil?" *First study in a series on Habakkuk*

Thomas Finger, 5748 W. Race, Chicago, IL 60644, is professor of systematic theology at Northern Baptist Seminary and is a member of First Mennonite Church at Oak Park.

Seven were hanged on a Swaziland Sabbat

Leona Penner

To my surprise the day dawned as it usually did. The sky behind the wooded mountains to the east lighted gradually, changing from misty grey to pale yellow, tinged with pink, to luminous, rosy orange. Subtle fingers of light reached upward and outward, caressing the windblown rocky peaks, encircling the ragged bark of tall eucalyptus trees, then hurried downward to our waiting garden, pausing here and there, to highlight delicate webs of dew caught among the grasses and within the shrubbery. Then at last the sun itself burst forth above the peaks—a bright orb of life-giving power, freely showering the world with a glorious abundance of brilliant light.

It looked like a glorious day. And yet I knew it wasn't. At least not for the seven people who were to be hanged that morning. For them it must have been a nightmare, a day of horror which would bring that final dying of the light, as Dylan Thomas put it, that final dying of hope and of love and of life. Never again would they see that brilliant sun that shines so faithfully on the just and the unjust alike, created by a righteous yet merciful God. Never again would they see the changing colors of the morning, the rocky grandeur of the mountains, the silent dignity of the reaching trees.

And what about the relatives and friends who remained behind, the ones who loved and cherished them and pled for mercy to the end? What will this shining day mean for them? Will it remain forever a horrifying memory, haunting their dreams for years to come?

For me this day will be one I remember because I know some of the intimate details of this particular story. I know, for example, that one of the men who is to die became a Christian and was baptized while in prison. And he was instrumental in leading two of the other death-row inmates to new life in Christ. I know also that this man was guilty of a terrible crime. He took the life of another in a drunken, barroom brawl. And though he had repented of his sin, he knew there was nothing he could do to erase that sin or to bring the other back. He wanted to pay for that crime in some way; to stay in prison for the rest of his life, ministering to others as a way of making restitution.

But there was no chance for that. There was no mercy. He had to die, and so, tomorrow, I will be sitting in a pew of a small Swazi church, together with his mourning relatives. Justice will have been done: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life—all part of the human tradition of justice, rooted in our understanding of Old Testament teaching and promoted even now by many believers within the Christian church.

They can't all be wrong, can they? People have to pay for their crimes in some way. That seems only fair. After all, they were responsible for someone else's death, brutally ending a life. And yet to take their lives also really accomplishes little—two wrongs just never make a right. There'll be two dead instead of one, that's all. More blood shed in a world that is already soaked with the blood of Abel and all those other brutal killings that have stained the earth throughout its history. Come to think of it, God didn't kill Cain for killing Abel. He put a mark on him which made him restless, then he let him go to work out his own salvation in fear and trembling.

If a sinless God could be so uncondemning, who are we to judge so harshly? All of us have harbored murder in our hearts when we nursed anger, and Jesus said that that alone makes murderers out of us all. But in spite of this guilt that we all carry, we are often eager to cast that first stone, to cry for blood when murder is committed.

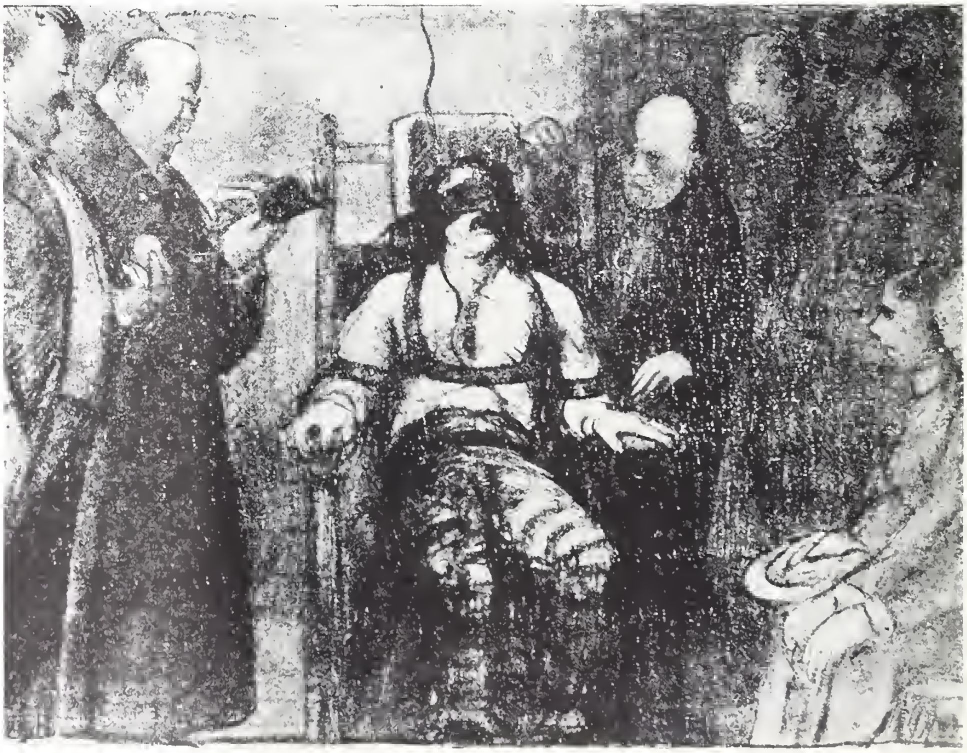
Why is that?

Could it be that somewhere deep within us we have a superstitious fear that if we don't shout out our abhorrence loudly enough, if we don't punish the guilty "outside" party severely enough, then the next time we are angry at another we might act out what we already harbor in our hearts?

I don't pretend to have the answers for these questions. All I know is that something is wrong when we who know ourselves to be fallen human beings resting solely in the grace and mercy of a forgiving, righteous God

Law professor James D. Barker, Duke University, has said, "The Bible can be rung, like chimes, a number of different ways. But don't let anybody sit here in this chair and tell you there is anything Christian about frying someone to death."

The illustration "Electrocution" by American artist George Bellows (d. 1925) graphically reflects the ordeal of capital punishment.



turn around and deny forgiveness and mercy to a fellow human being.

Has God's love and forgiveness changed nothing in us? Are we still promoting vengeance, eager to condemn the sinner for the sins committed?

If so, I shudder to think of the consequences—consequences which Jesus describes in Matthew 18:21-35 in the story of the unmerciful servant. A servant who had been forgiven a vast debt himself—"millions," the Bible says—had no compassion on another who owed him a pittance. Instead of forgiving in his turn, he had his debtor thrown in jail. And when the master heard about this, he said, " 'You worthless slave! I forgave you the whole amount you owed me, just because you asked me to. You should have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you.' The master was very angry, and sent the servant to jail to be punished until he should pay back the whole amount. And Jesus concluded, 'That is how my Father in heaven will treat you if you do not forgive your brother, every one of you, from the heart.' "

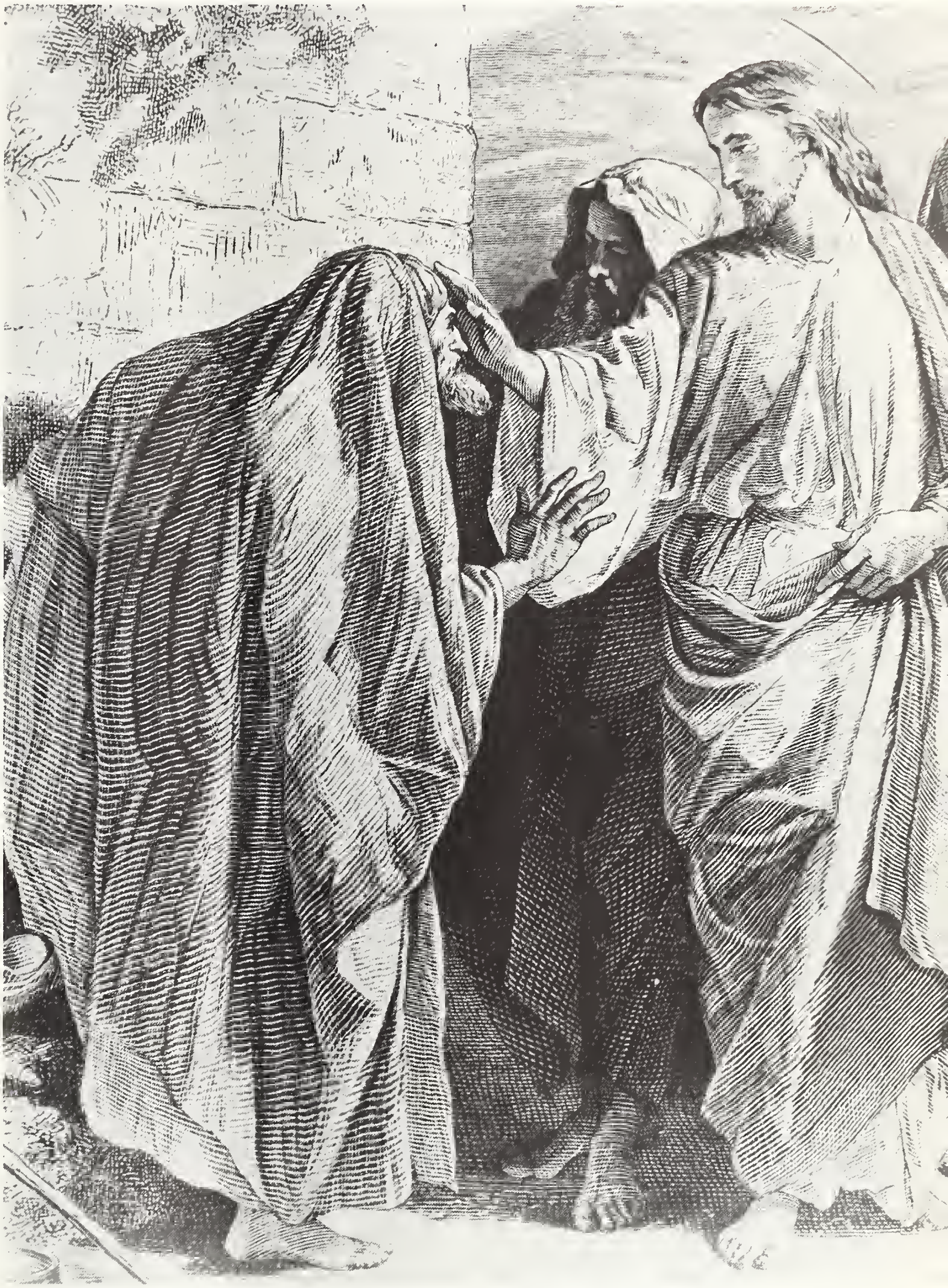
Father,
So easily and so often,
we pray:
"Forgive us our trespasses."
It seems,
we trust in your grace and in your mercy almost with complacency.

And yet,
when we see others sinning,
we cry,
not for mercy
but for justice,
which looks more like revenge.

We forget
our own need for grace
and, like stern judges, we demand:
—an eye for an eye
—a tooth for a tooth
—a life for a life. . . .

And so,
this lovely Sabbath morning,
the nooses tighten
'round the necks of seven people
as echoes from another execution
ring faintly in our ears:

"Father,
forgive them,
for they know not what they do
they know not what they do. . . ."



In contrast to our world today, Jesus was ever healing those who needed help.

Leona Dueck Penner, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8, is co-director of the MCC Canada Peace and Social Concerns office. Together with her husband, Peter, they have been in Africa 10 years with Mennonite Central Committee—six years in Zambia and four years in Swaziland/Mozambique.

"We have claimed 2 Corinthians 8:7-15," says Virginia Toews of Lame Deer, Mont., "and have named our building committee the 'readiness committee.' " Members of Petter Memorial Church in Lame Deer have set about to raise $70,000 (and are asking the General Conference Development Fund for $200,000) to build a church. Pastored by Joe Walks Along, the congregation of around 50 has already gathered $60,000. "Every family is involved," says Toews. "There is excitement among members and in the community."

The controversial question of South Africa dominated discussion at the Africa committee of the Council of International Ministries April 28-30 in Winnipeg. It was debated whether CIM should take a formal position on the issue. Erwin Rempel of the Commission on Overseas Mission asked, "We don't make statements regarding other oppressive governments where we work. What makes South Africa different?" Wilbert Shenk of the Mennonite Board of Missions said, "Nowhere else is the situation so much in the headlines. . . . We have more often been remiss in failing to take a position than the other way around. . . ."

NEWS

Discuss future integration

Pacific District, Pacific Coast celebrate

Canby, Ore.—Two Conferences, Pacific District (GC) and Pacific Coast (MC) came together at the Canby Grove Conference Center here June 20-22 around the theme "Discipleship: Celebrating the Journey."

And celebrate they did. Joint business and workshop sessions seemed like hors d'oeuvres. The delegates heard reports of what each conference is and what it does. Two sets of one-hour workshops included topics like estate planning, friendship evangelism, expressing faith in art, charismatic renewal and the latest information on the draft.

But the main course was celebration. And it was a well-spread buffet. Two Mennonite clowns did a drama pointing to the way of the cross—"Call to Foolishness." Two Portland Mennonite actresses acted out "The Story of Maeyken Wens," an Anabaptist woman martyred at the stake in 1573. A country western/soft rock band from Grace Mennonite Church, Dallas, Ore., Sound Judgment, belted out a concert. The grand finale was an original cantata, "One Man's Journey," that portrayed a pilgrim's journey, at first loaded down with sin, and climaxing in his discovery of the living Lord. It came complete with the effects of all doors and windows being thrown open to let light flood over a darkened hall.

"Pilgrim," burdened down with a heavy load, is looking for hope and for help.

Evangelist and pastor Myron Augsburger, Washington, preached three sermons on discipleship and kingdom-of-God living. He called for a high priority to our "King," Jesus, along with an "incarnational theology that combines a Jesus-from-above and Jesus-from-below" (his divinity and humanity). Augsburger told the joint sessions that Mennonites need a "spirituality where diversity is confirmed and accountability is practiced" and a "spirituality that will interface personal piety and social responsibility." He also called for Mennonites to practice a reconciliation style that "recognizes estrangement," then builds "bridges of love," takes the initiative "in making peace," and "accepts the cost of building relationships."

The two conferences held separate business sessions for one day prior to the joint sessions.

Pacific District Conference delegates adopted a policy on "gifts and loans" to churches. It was needed as PDC pursues its major church planting goals. A statement on ministerial/congregational ethics was affirmed for study in the churches and will be brought to the 1987 sessions at Aberdeen, Idaho. A new constitutional bylaw change provides for "church

Engineering . . .

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A Honduran Mennonite pastor from Moriah, Honduras, a village overrun by contras in late March, visited the village soon after the raid to find out if any church members were still there. He told Mennonite Central Committee workers in the area that he was arrested by contras and taken to Moriah, where he was forced to point out Nicaraguan Mennonite men. Eight Mennonites, ranging from teenagers to men over 50, were abducted at gunpoint by the contras for military training. At the pastor's pleas, the contras released the four older men but refused to release the four younger men.

Donna Williams, a member of Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, stopped there to be baptized on her way (walking) from California to Washington as part of the Great Peace March. At the same worship service, Dawn and Kent Friesen (having joined Arvada Church a year ago, coming from United Methodist and Roman Catholic backgrounds) told the congregation that they felt called to join the cross-country march. The three Mennonites say they are eager to share their Christian faith and concerns for peace with people along the way.

"Christian journalists must not print holy baloney," said Richard Foster at the Evangelical Press Association convention in May. "There is too much Christian propaganda. The good is too good, and the bad is too bad. When we practice listening to God, he sends us out in the world with greater balance and perspective."

The two clowns started out "doing their own thing." When they discovered the cross, with its uniting and healing love, they were startled and hardly knew how to respond.

property reversion." If a church has received PDC grants or loans, its property would revert to the conference in the event of dissolving the church or ceasing to be a PDC member.

In response to a proposal from the Southwest Conference (MC), PDC agreed to participate in a task force consisting of SWC, PDC and PCC representatives to study further possibilities for cooperation and eventual "integration."

The new budget calls for a 10 percent increase in giving by the PDC churches. James Wenger, Fresno, Calif., was re-elected president. *Bernie Wiebe*

Self-help and thrift shop to be opened in Hamilton in August requires a manager on a voluntary service basis.

Contact:
Barry Bishop
155 Lower Horning Road
Hamilton, ON K8S 3G8
(416) 521-1828.

Central America study group returns to share what it saw

Scottdale, Pa. (MCC)—Twelve North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ leaders visited El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras June 2-20.

The study tour was led by Joetta Handrich Schlabach, Mennonite Central Committee worker in Honduras, and J. R. Burkholder of Goshen, Ind.

MCC workers in Central America invited the group to visit the region in the hope that the burdens MCC workers bear for the poor and persecuted in Central America might be shared more broadly.

Much of what the tour members experienced during the trip was indeed intense. They listened to stories of displaced persons, political prisoners, pastors under pressure and peasants who could barely feed their families. Carrie Harder of Kitchener, Ont., recalled 40 people in a hut with wicks burning: "I have seen the face of God . . . I will never be the same again."

Recognizing that the people they serve have different sources and opinions on Central America, members of the study tour wondered about their own credibility upon return. Will people believe us if we come with a view different from the official government position? they asked. They concluded that the best they could do was to heed the appeal to "tell what you have seen and heard."

Conrad Wetzel of Tiskilwa, Ill., concluded that the church has the answer to problems in Central America "if it will be a society not afraid of international terrorism, that seeks fairness and justice for all and doesn't fear persecution. Many Americans," he observed, "are afraid."

Members of the group were pleased with the dedication and sensitivity they found among MCC workers. This was symbolized for them by one MCC country representative who made the offhand remark, "If I am killed. . . ."

They also took courage from the vision of Guatemalan and Honduran Mennonite leaders they met near the end of the tour. They are seeking to develop a Central American Mennonite theology in a context of pressure. A "theology of the road," more like that of Menno Simons than like the academic theologies of Calvin and Luther, is taking shape, according to Honduran Mennonite leader Juan Angel Ochoa. *Daniel Hertzler*

Job opening

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Mennonite Collegiate Institute invites applications for the position of residence life coordinator (one female and one male staff member needed). Enthusiasm for working with youth, leadership abilities, experience and/or training in counseling and interest in recreational planning are desirable qualifications. Duties commence on **Aug. 30**.

Please send resume to:
Allan Dueck, principal
MCI
Box 250
Gretna, MB R0G 0V0
(204) 327-5891
or
(204) 327-5364.

Registered nurses who speak Spanish and/or Low German are needed at Nuevo Namiquipa Clinic near Cuauhtemoc in Mexico. Administered locally, the clinic serves an area of about 200 square miles. The six to seven employees of the clinic serve over 2,000 people per year.

A recent study cosponsored by the Commission on Education (General Conference) and Student and Young Adult Services (Mennonite Church) sought to identify and gather information about Mennonite congregations that have emerged in the past 20-30 years primarily as a result of Mennonite students and young adults who moved to urban and university settings and remained there. A questionnaire went to 88 congregations in early winter 1985.

Pearl Janzen of Reedley, Calif., is leading a nine-day tour Oct. 22-30 entitled "God's People in the Southwest: Past and Present." Learning from the Native American church in Arizona and New Mexico is a purpose of the tour. High points include Frijoles Canyon and Canyon de Chelly, a cookout with the people of Black Mountain [Navajo] Mennonite Church in New Mexico, worship at Kykotsmovi Mennonite Church in Arizona, attendance at chapel at Hopi Mission School and visits to Flagstaff and Albuquerque. For more information contact Stan Bohn, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

Statement by Central America study tour

. . . We learned most from personal encounters. Images that will remain with us include stories from rural Salvadorans who spent up to a month at a time hiding from their own army, Christian youth threatened by forced military recruitment, peasant pastors who walk for hours to minister to their people and who are more concerned with faithfulness than personal safety, the emergence of Christian community even in a refugee camp. The experienced and dedicated MCC workers we met taught us much.

Most of our time was spent listening to Central American Christians—Mennonites, as well as Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans and others. We wept with brothers and sisters who continue to preach good news to the poor in spite of the risk of being called "communist." (In some situations that label is a virtual death threat.) We felt the pain of church communities that are being divided by the same ideological conflicts that divide their society. We marveled at the dedication of believers who are rejoicing and growing in faith despite incredible hardships. We applauded the new vision for Mennonite theological education that is rooted in Anabaptism and applied practically to the actual context. Above all we found new hope as we witnessed a church filled with hope in the face of powerlessness, suffering and oppression.

For these brothers and sisters, social, economic and political factors beyond their control dominate their lives in ways we North Americans can scarecely comprehend. . . .

We recognize the hazards of making political judgments about the complex Central American scene, but we are agreed that U.S. military presence and intervention has only raised the human cost of the conflict and blocks possibilities for negotiations and normalized relations between countries. Almost all the persons we met, representing a wide range of theological and political persuasions, asked us to do what we can to stop military aid to the area.

As we met with dozens of groups, in each case we offered to carry their message to North American churches: "Tell them what you have seen and heard!" "Our problem is not communism, but poverty and oppression." "We are one body in Christ; when one member suffers, all suffer."

. . . We came to understand that our lives are linked to theirs, both at the level of faith and at the level of social, political and economic policies. We recognize anew our sin of materialism that perpetuates an unjust economic system. We call upon the church of North America to listen to these voices from Central America, to hear both the suffering and the hope that we have heard. These are prophetic words for our time. We were impressed anew about the way the universality of the church transcends all national borders. We are all part of one family of God. Our experience has led us to give ourselves anew to the cause of God's kingdom.

Participants in MCC study tour to Central America walk in San Salvador (from left to right): James Gingerich, Moundridge, Kan.; Blake Ortman, MCC worker in El Salvador; Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus, Harrisonburg, Va. (far back); Eber Dourte, Dillsburg, Pa.; Jake Letkemann, Winnipeg; Lawrence Chiles, Lancaster, Pa.; and Werner Kroeker, San Jose, Calif.

About 25 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ home ministries administrators and several urban pastors met in Chicago April 8 to discuss common concerns. Simon Pellew, a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., presented his analysis of a survey of Mennonite congregations. The most controversial conclusion he drew was that the needs and aspirations of churches in small population centers (under 25,000) were not significantly different from those in large centers (over 500,000). He also observed that an emphasis on clear membership expectations encourages congregational growth.

Hard Choices: *Federal Budget Priorities in the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Era*, published by Interfaith Action, describes the dangers and opportunities of a period in which the United States must decide "what (programs) should be reduced or eliminated, what should be maintained, and what, if anything, should be increased. Decisions must also be faced on whether to raise revenues. The choices made will shape our society for years to come." The report notes the special danger facing millions of poor families and individuals as the new era dawns.

Violence in Hollywood movies continues at record levels, and this summer's first new movies are no exception, according to the National Coalition on Television Violence. *Cobra* and *Poltergeist II* are the subject of protest from NCTV, a citizen watchdog group. According to NCTV's monitoring of 90 popular Hollywood films since last fall, violence in Hollywood films has never been higher. The films averaged some 31 acts of violence per hour.

IMS consultation hears women on biblical interpretation

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—A consultation on "Biblical Theology and Hermeneutics: Women's Perspectives" drew 45 women and men to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries June 20-22.

The event was one in a series of five consultations intended to enrich the seminaries' Institute of Mennonite Studies (IMS) projects in biblical studies. The consultation had particular import for the six-year IMS project leading to publications on biblical theology from a "shalom" perspective.

Planned by IMS staff Willard M. Swartley and Elizabeth G. Yoder, and a committee of women, the purpose of the consultation was threefold: (1) to think carefully about how recent women's perspectives in biblical studies affect the discipline of biblical theology, (2) to become aware of and test these contributions (especially those that relate to the significance of "God as Father" and the predominant biblical representation of God as male) and (3) to shape and strengthen the "shalom" biblical theology project.

Three consultants from other religious traditions helped place Mennonite agenda in a larger picture. The consultants were Catherine Clark Kroeger, specializing in Greek classics at the University of Minnesota, Toinette Eugene, professor of education, society and black studies at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, and Adela Yarbro Collins, professor of biblical studies at the University of Notre Dame.

The three Mennonite scholars in residence at IMS for the month of June shared from their research. AMBS graduate Mary Schertz of Vanderbilt University in Tennessee led the group in three provocative Bible studies: Luke 19:28—21:38, 1 Peter 2:18—3:6 and Judges 11:26-40.

Also in residence and participating in the consultation were David Schroeder of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and John W. Miller of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.

Others, mostly women, represented locations from Ontario to Kansas, California to Virginia. The contributions of Archie Ligo, a teacher of theology in the Philippines, challenged consultation participants with perspectives from a country of the two-thirds world.

A theme bridging all sessions and topics had to do with acknowledging the biases and presuppositions all of us bring to Bible study and theology. Since we cannot help but read the Bible through the lenses of our unique life experience, conference participants called for the need to discover what each of us brings to biblical study. Discerning how the eyes we start with influence what we actually see is an ongoing process.

Once it is recognized that much theology has been seen through the eyes of one particular set of experiences (that of affluent white men), the need for the insights of other "eyes" becomes clear. Women, people of color, the economically and politically oppressed and other groups whose insights have not been adequately recognized and encouraged in the past face a tremendous task—owning their experience and strengthening others with their insights.

The weekend was laced with concrete examples of how women's experience has been slighted in biblical theology. Since women have not until recently been involved in the translation of biblical texts from the original ancient Hebrew and Greek, it is often helpful to return to these original texts.

Catherine Clark Kroeger noted that identical words in the Hebrew and Greek texts are often translated into different words in English. An example is found in Romans 16:1. Here in the KJV Phoebe is a "servant" (v. 1) and "helper" (v. 2), but in 1 Corinthians 3:5 the same word as in Romans 16:1 is used by Paul to identify himself and Apollos as ministers of the gospel. How have the nuances in these translations shaped our experiences as a church?

Biblical interpretation must involve both critical reflection and action. Reflection begins with the question "With whom do we identify?" asserted Toinette Eugene and others. Do we understand the experience of the poor and other marginalized groups sufficiently to articulate a theology that does justice to all those created in God's image? If not, dialogue with other groups can only strengthen our faith. But action must follow on the heels of reflection. Engagement with the struggles of marginalized peoples will help us understand the message of the gospel. *Ann Weber Becker*

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Don Yoder, Tempe, Ariz., is leading three Friendship Evangelism Seminars in coming months. Yoder, secretary for church planting and evangelism for the General Conference, will be at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., Sept. 19-20; in Mountain Lake, Minn., Nov. 14-15; and at Forks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind., Oct. 23-24. For more information contact the Commission on Home Ministries, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

Break '86, a churchwide event for Mennonite Church and General Conference young adults, will be held Dec. 27-31 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa., with the theme "Dimensions of Decision Making." Palmer Becker, pastor at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C., will address the theme. Other activities will include worship, singing, small group discussion, movies, late-night coffeehouse activities, a talent show and outdoor recreation. For more information contact Student and Young Adult Services, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370, (219) 294-7523.

Hymnal Council wades through 500 post-1950 hymns

Lagrange Park, Ill. (Meetinghouse)—The people putting together a new hymnal for the Mennonites, Brethren and Churches of God spent much of their time, June 4-8, wading through 500 post-1950 hymns that had been submitted to them. They rejected about half of them, accepted 33, and agreed to take another look at the rest of the hymns.

Meeting at Christian Life Center, a Catholic retreat facility here, the Hymnal Council and its four committees had decided to tackle the newer hymns first before launching into the delicate task of sorting through the more traditional selections from their current hymnals.

Charged with the responsibility were the music and text committees, which stuck to an exhaustive schedule in order to complete the painstaking job. The music committee used a piano to sing its way through many of the hymns. The text committee, which had been instructed to ignore the tunes, finally rebelled and began singing some of the submissions in order to get a better "feel" for the words.

The new hymnal, projected to be ready for use by 1992, will serve the Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church, Church of the Brethren and Churches of God (General Conference).

Much of the work of the council is conducted by the four committees—music, text, worship and publishing—during and between its semiannual meetings. The committees are made up of the 16 council members plus two others from each denomination.

In addition to selecting hymns, the council needs to define the role of this particular hymnal, meet the needs of as many people as possible in the four denominations and update the words and tunes so that they will be relevant to the 1990s and beyond.

Three members of the music committee try out a hymn (from left): Mary Oyer (Mennonite Church), Joyce Thornton (Churches of God) and George Wiebe (General Conference).

On the latter the text committee is busy proposing revisions like modernizing archaic language ("thy" to "your"), changing *me*-centered expressions to the more congregational *we* and—most controversial of all—switching to more inclusive language to correct the heavily male terminology of the past (from "man" and "brother" to "people" and "brothers and sisters").

The worship committee, meanwhile, is responding to a call for more worship aids by developing a total of about 50 pages of litanies, prayers, responsive readings, calls to worship and other materials.

In other matters, the council:

- Increased the number of pages for the new hymnal from 640 to 704.
- Tentatively agreed that two-thirds of the hymns will come from the current 640-page *Mennonite Hymnal* and the 704-page *Brethren Hymnal.*
- Reminded itself that expenses on the project will need to be recouped from sales of the new hymnal, which it predicted would be 77,000 to 100,000 in the first five years.
- Adopted a formal statement of purpose, calling for the new hymnal to be "a vehicle for expressions of our faith, our heritage and our life."
- Agreed that the hymnal should reflect the diversity within the denominations by including materials that will be used by blacks, Hispanics, charismatics and young people—as well as by the mainstream congregations. *Steve Shenk*

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The Lion and the Lamb Arts Center at Bluffton (Ohio) College, which was approved by the board of trustees in April, is the only one of its kind in the nation with the distinctive emphasis on peace education for children through the arts. The center will include collections of children's literature, art, music, letters from authors and artists about their work, original manuscripts, and videotapes that promote the arts and stimulate discussion concerning issues relevant to the principles of the center. Elizabeth Hostetler has been named director of the center.

The Mennonite World Conference has announced the launching of *Correo*, a new Spanish-language quarterly magazine for the international Mennonite community. The magazine will be sent to General Council members, Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church leaders and other interested people in Spanish-speaking countries. It will present news of the worldwide Mennonite church. Editor of *Correo* will be David Shelly of Newton, Kan.

After threatening phone calls and two robberies (March 15 and May 2), Abe and Chris Buhler, missionaries in Brazil under the Commission on Overseas Mission, took time during June to assess their situation. They remain confident that God has called them to church planting in Brazil.

RECORD

MINISTERS

Marie M. S. Chen was ordained June 28 as a pastor in the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan and chaplain of Mennonite Christian Hospital.

Pauline Kennel has been invited to be the minister of Chicago Area Mennonites for the next three years.

WORKERS

Betsy Bergen returned to Herbert, Sask., in mid-June after spending two years in Taiwan as an Overseas Mission Volunteer under the Commission on Overseas Mission. She taught children of missionaries and other workers at Hwalien Christian School.

Herman Bontrager was appointed executive secretary of the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section at the semiannual Peace Section meeting June 20-21. He will succeed Urbane Peachy.

The Mennonite Collegiate Institute board has extended an invitation to *Allan Dueck* and *Dave Regehr* to head up the school's administration on a permanent basis after serving this past year on an interim basis. Dueck, who holds a Master of Divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., and an M.A. degree in English from the University of Edmonton, will serve as principal. Regehr, who holds a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Manitoba, will serve as vice principal. Both will retain teaching responsibilities on a one-quarter-time basis.

Kennel

Werner

Henry Enns, Winnipeg, will begin a part-time three-year term with MCC as an overseas consultant in September. He will help MCC workers overseas to develop and improve programs for people with handicaps.

Carl and *Margaret Epp*, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., have begun four-month Mennonite Central Committee terms in Mexico. They will work as program administrators and unit leaders.

Gail and *Steven Erickson*, First Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., have begun three-year MCC terms in Nepal. Steven will work with water resources. Gail has a bachelor's degree in elementary education and Steven a bachelor's degree in community health, both from Mankato (Minn.) State University. Their children are Elizabeth, Nathaniel and Daniel. Her parents are Elizabeth and Henry Harder of Mountain Lake. His are Gerald and Marcella Erickson of Roseville, Minn.

Gary and *Maureen Penner Groot* arrived in Saskatchewan in mid-June after completing a three-year mission term of service in Zaire under COM/Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. The Groots were involved in the medical program at Kalonda, Gary as a doctor and Maureen in the social work aspect of the public health program. Gary enrolled in a medical residency program in Saskatoon July 1.

Kathryn Jantzen, Reedley, Calif., has begun a two-year MCC term in Reedley. She is administrative assistant with the West Coast MCC office.

Helen and *Jake Loewen*, Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Church, have begun three-month MCC terms with SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa.

Alverta S. Martin, Akron (Pa.) Church, has begun a two-year MCC term with SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa.

Gloria and *Harold Nussbaum*, Koinonia Fellowship, Chandler, Ariz., have begun MCC assignments in Akron, Pa. Gloria is administrative assistant with the MCC Africa department, and Harold is assistant secretary of personnel services. They previously served with MCC in Miami. Gloria has a bachelor's degree in English from Goshen (Ind.) College. Harold has a bachelor's degree in political science from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, and a master's degree in music from Arizona State University, Tempe. Gloria is the daughter of Helen Yoder of Logansport, Ind., and the late LeRoy Yoder. Harold's parents are George and Viola Nussbaum of Twin Falls, Idaho.

Diana Werner, Grace Church, Winkler, Man., is beginning a two-year term in Winkler as assistant to the director of MCC Family Services. She attended the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg. Her parents are Frank and Helen Suderman of Winkler.

Randall S. Zwally, Akron (Pa.) Church, is beginning a two-year MCC term at SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa. He has a bachelor's degree in music education from West Chester (Pa.) State University. His parents are Lorraine and Robert Zwally of Ephrata.

Chernobyl and the worldwide nuclear network

Art Meyer

The Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident has reminded us of the proliferation of nuclear development.

Nuclear research and the expanding commercial nuclear power industry have brought nuclear reactors to 56 countries. In 1985 there were 516 nuclear power plants operating or under construction, Ruth Leger Sivard reports in her book *World Military and Social Expenditures 1985*. There were an additional 375 research reactors.

The United States has the most nuclear power plants and reactors—130 nuclear power plants and 127 research reactors. Second is France with 64 power plants and 21 research reactors. The Soviet Union is third with 61 power plants and 23 research reactors. Canada has 25 nuclear power plants and 12 research reactors.

Sivard points out that "nuclear plants are silent accessories in the rising level of nuclear danger" aside from the hazards they represent in the normal course of operation.

They are a growing risk to world security, she explains, because they are a source of plutonium for clandestine weapons production. Besides producing electricity, civilian nuclear power plants produce plutonium, as a byproduct, which can be used to make nuclear weapons.

The largest quantity of separated plutonium is in the weapons industry of the five nuclear powers—the United States, France, the Soviet Union, England and Japan.

But increasing amounts of separated plutonium are now coming from commercial nuclear reactor fuel. Over 15 Western countries are involved in civilian fuel reprocessing.

Recent studies at Princeton University indicate that through 1984 about 60 metric tons of plutonium had already been separated from spent fuel. That is enough plutonium to make 7,500 nuclear weapons similar in size to the one dropped on Hiroshima.

Sivard also points out that nuclear power plants can, "in the event of hostilities, be a Trojan horse for the country harboring them." Each power plant is worth over $1 billion, is critical to national and regional energy supply, and is a huge time bomb within the enemy's homeland, vulnerable to attack by conventional as well as nuclear weapons.

From the distance of a mile or more, shoulder-fired antitank weapons can pierce six feet of concrete, for example.

A one megaton nuclear weapon hitting four miles away could cause enough damage to the control room to make a core meltdown likely; at 880 yards the containment vessel itself would be ruptured. A megaton fission weapon striking a single large reactor would release lethal contamination in an area 50 miles by 200 miles.

It took 40 years to develop the nuclear network. One wonders how many Hiroshimas, Three Mile Islands and now Chernobyls there will need to be to begin reversing the buildup of nuclear weapons and power plants.

For a copy of the Sivard report, send $5 to World Military and Social Expenditures 1985, World Priorities, Inc., Box 25140, Washington, DC 20007.

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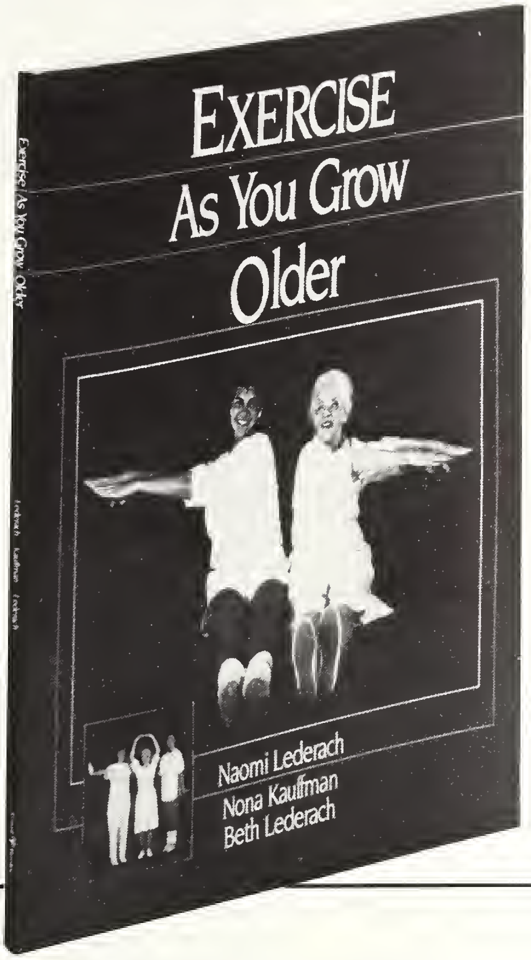

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by Naomi Lederach, Nona Kauffman, and Beth Lederach
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Naomi Lederach, a registered nurse and family counselor, her daughter Beth, a high school English teacher and drill team coach, and her mother Nona Kauffman, a vigorous 87-year-old retiree, demonstrate in this volume that fitness encompasses all of life. It includes regular exercise, sensible diet, healthy family relationships, and a generous dose of humor.

Most of the book is devoted to an exercise program of stretching and toning, thoroughly illustrated with large black-and-white photos and clearly described in large-print text, that can benefit men and women of all ages. One special section, nicknamed "Nona-robics," details Mrs. Kauffman's own self-styled exercise plan.

Naomi Lederach also discusses the benefits of walking and the importance of good nutrition, and gives an annotated list of additional resources.

And throughout, all three stress the importance of starting where you are and progressing at your own speed in order to live a healthier, happier life at any age.

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Forgiveness and punishment

During the week of May 5 the murderers of our son James were sentenced. We as the families of the victim, James Thimm, were asked to give input.

Now we needed to decide, and our beliefs came to a test. Should we give input or say it is the business of the state?

Of course, our greatest dilemma is the sentencing of Mike Ryan, the leader of the group. His diagnosis—sadism. It is the cold, calculated torture of victims for sexual gratification. In the eyes of our law this man should receive the death penalty. He has been found guilty, and his sentence will be death or life imprisonment.

A survey of over 300,000 criminal cases in 1983 reports that the median time served on life sentences is eight years and seven months. Half the murderers serve less than seven years. Half the rapists serve less than four years.

Do we use sympathy and suggest life imprisonment? Then who is responsible for the next torture and murder that Mike Ryan will invariably do? Who is responsible for those he convinces of his big "Yahweh" worship while he is in prison? He had one prisoner, who was in for bad check writing, almost convinced of his way, and they were together for only a few weeks.

Does forgiveness mean that people not be held responsible for their crime and be set free, or do they still serve their time and punishment?

Are our laws there for a purpose or do we pull back just short of allowing them to be used, as a person who does not believe in surgery pulls back from surgery if his or her appendix ruptured because God heals and a Christian must not rely on surgery? If we remain silent, does that relieve us of responsibility, or is silence assent?

Jim Coggins reports that "today's Christians are going through the same baptism by fire that Mennonites went through at earlier stages of their history" (June 10 issue). Our son was a martyr for Jesus Christ. How do we respond in a country where the law is still trying to maintain right? Our questions are many.

This is not a matter of retaliation. There is nothing that can be done to get even for the terrible torture that our James went through. Even if you have read every article printed, you have not heard all of it. Not all of it could be printed. *Hilda Neufeld Schmidt, 1212 N. 14, Beatrice, NE 68310*

June 16

Maybe it's too much

I am not profoundly opposed to women in leadership, but I think it is being overemphasized. It is said, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the nation." Sometimes I wonder if the cradle is being rocked by mothers' hands. Page after page was devoted in the May 27 issue to women's rights. I think it was adequately dealt with in the page contributed by Elaine Sommers Rich. A woman can be active in God's work and not have her name in dazzling lights. Are we seeking glory for ourselves or seeking to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit to do whatever God has appointed us to do—whether it be great or small?

When it came to the sculpture by Edwina Sandys, I could not resist writing this letter. That picture grieved my heart. Jesus was the *son* of God. Is there no censorship as to what goes into *The Mennonite*?

I wish our paper might have more articles that were truly inspirational. I thoroughly enjoyed the meditation "There Is Strength in Quietness" by Helen Friesen. Why not more of this type of thing than all this liberality subject matter? *May Vercler, Route 2, Washington, IL 61571.*

June 18

Editor's note: You sort of answer your own question. You found many pages of acceptable and even inspirational matter. Would you then let one picture of an offensive piece of art influence you more than all the rest?

Disgusted at photo

The article and accompanying picture "Women Are Coming into Their Own" (May 27 issue) is a disgrace to every Christian woman.

That you would print such degrading matter leaves great doubt concerning your biblical principles.

We women are important to God, so important he gave us a special place and role to fill. When we step out of our rightful spot and try to assume the male position, we are in trouble. Each day we fight the women's liberation movement. Must we also be bombarded with this garbage in our publications?

Never have I been so angry and disgusted. I feel an apology is needed. *Mrs. Delwayne Epp, Route 3, York, NE 68467*

June 20

Editor's note: I do apologize for having offended anybody with that photo. It was meant only *to show what an artist in another Protestant denomination had done. Please note it had only that kind of cutline; no words to promote it.*

Let's pray together

The tragedy of the Challenger and Chernobyl makes one aware how insecure our world is. I believe that by all means we should write to those in authority. But shouldn't we pray more? I am reading a chapter in Acts every day as suggested in *In Touch* in preparation for Saskatoon '86 and it strikes me how those people prayed spontaneously in groups. Somehow we don't do that anymore. But couldn't we? Just get together to pray without a meditation or a special leader? *Marie J. Janzen, 217 Muse #104, Newton, KS 67114*

June 20

Devil is tickled

If there was any spiritual nourishment in the May 27 issue I completely lost sight of it when I saw the blasphemy of Jesus Christ. I cannot even begin to express my disgust and horror at such blasphemy as is portrayed on page 222 in the photo of the female Christ. I cannot believe you would publish such a thing for any reason.

I don't think Christ is at all pleased, but the devil sure must be tickled. *Dave Peters, Box 1120, Watrous, SK S0K 4T0*

June 23

Does not deserve approval

It appears artist Edwina Sandys has invested her time and talent in creating a piece of sensationalism to gain publicity and attract attention (May 27 issue).

Seibert gives us much background on the past oppression of women and the progress they have made over the years. Sandys shows us how women extremists undermine the progress they worked so hard to attain. Perhaps the "overwhelmingly positive response," indicated in the picture's

LETTERS

caption, parallels that of the response to the emperor's new clothes in the popular children's story. The intended symbolism may have been applauded by the women's liberation movement, but the sculpture itself is such a distortion of biblical fact that it mocks what is sacred and does not deserve the approval of Mennonite Christians. *Shirley Dunkelberger, Box 44, Tafton, PA 18464*

June 24

To article and to editorial

There are truths in the article "Women Are Coming into Their Own" (May 27 issue). But does this article give glory to Jesus? Is the Holy Spirit working in the picture? Do you think he is proud of us when we talk about our achievements without giving him the praise for allowing it? It seems more like a newspaper item to me.

In the editorial you challenge: "I'll listen to anyone who suggests no male-female distinction if you show me a man who has given birth." Answer: Genesis 2:23f. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Another birth from man comes from Jesus himself. The man, Savior, Lord Jesus Christ has given every living soul the opportunity for a new birth. He died to give us our new birth. What more can be said?

My prayer is that *The Mennonite* will be used as a tool to witness to the lost, promote the Lord's work, share the saving power of Jesus Christ and tell how his Holy Spirit is moving in power. *Steve Alderfer, 380 Main St., Harleysville, PA 19438*

June 24

It's a great magazine

I have just read the June 24 issue. What a great magazine it is!

In it I read the letter to the editor by Steve(n) E. McKelvy (p. 287).

The enclosed check is for payment of his subscription. *Trudy Wiebe, 305-690 Scotland Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3M 1X4*

June 30

RESOURCES

Jesus' Bicycle, a Sisters&Brothers film written and produced by Joel Kauffman, stars Dirk Vardaman Lind, who has mental and physical disabilities, as himself. The 20-minute film may be rented from Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515, (219) 294-7536.

In his book **Dwell in Peace** (Brethren Press, 1985), Ronald C. Arnett reminds readers that non-violent peacemaking means working through conflict, not just avoiding it. The book costs $6.95; a study guide is $2.

The NIV Study Bible (Zondervan, 1985), based on the New International Version text, includes complete introductions and outlines for every book; maps, charts, diagrams and illustrations located in the text on the pages to which they refer; plus full-color timelines of both Old and New Testaments.

The 31 sermons in **Sermons You Can Preach on Matthew** (Zondervan, 1985) by W. Herschel Ford provide pastors and teachers with a way to work through the entire Gospel of Matthew. It costs $8.95.

The Believers' Church (Herald Press, 1985) by Donald Durnbaugh is available after having been out of print several years. It costs $12.95 ($16.85 in Canada).

A study packet on **Women in Leadership Ministries**, designed for group interaction and for personal reflection, study and action, is available for $4 from the Committee on Women in Leadership Ministries, 528 E. Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148-3599, (312) 620-7802.

African Journey (Eerdmans, 1985) by Mark Patinkin is a firsthand account of famine-stricken Africa. Patinkin discovers a humanity and dignity among people whose land has turned merciless and whose lives have become an inhuman tragedy. It costs $4.95.

A new Mennonite Central Committee 1985-86 **Resource Catalog** is available from MCC, Box M, Akron, PA 17501, or MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8. It includes audiovisual and printed materials on such topics as hunger, peacemaking, justice and MCC's mission.

Arminius (Francis Asbury Press, 1985) by Carl Bangs is a biography of Reformation theologian Jacob Arminius. It costs $10.95.

Well-known for his many books on sociology and theology, Jacques Ellul for the first time intertwines sociological analysis with theological discussion in **The Humiliation of the Word** (Eerdmans, 1985). He examines how reality (which is visual) has superseded truth (which is verbal) in modern times. It costs $14.95.

Hearing God (Chosen Books, 1985) by Lory Basham Jones is a daily devotional with specific scriptural passages, a personal account of her petitions and God's guidance. It costs $10.95.

The American Bible Society is offering **three separate versions of the Bible** at $1.50 each, the lowest price for any of its Bibles since 1978. The three are the Good News Bible in Today's English Version, the King James Version and the *Version Popular* Spanish Bible.

The Enigma of Evil (Zondervan, 1985) by John W. Wenham is a look at the moral problems raised by the Bible. It costs $7.95.

Over 100,000 people in North America live as members of communities of "plain people." In **A Quiet and Peaceable Life** (Good Books, 1985) John L. Ruth describes these people. Previously published in 1979, this revision includes many new photos and 32 additional pages of text. It costs $3.95.

A prisoner has blessed us

An interview with Jamie McDonald, minister at Windsor Park Evangelical Free Church, Winnipeg.

Joseph Power (left), stands by the church with two Prison Fellowship volunteers, Audrey and John Harder.

How has your church been involved with an ex-prisoner?
A member of our congregation and volunteer with Prison Fellowship (PF), Audrey Harder, told me about the ministry. She arranged for me to have coffee with the Winnipeg director, Ken Gerbrandt. Ken told me that a young Christian man with whom PF had been working in a pre-release program, was soon being released. Would our congregation be willing to help him out?

I was keen on it. I felt if God had placed this need in front of us, we should follow up. So I went out to the prison that week and met Joseph Power.

What was your impression of him?
At first a little apprehensive. He looked a little wild—a John-the-Baptist type with long hair and a beard. But as I watched him and we talked, I recognized a deep peace in him. I sensed he had experienced a genuine conversion.

Did you have any apprehensions in bringing him into your congregation?
My only concern was wondering if our middle-class congregation could accept someone who was rough around the edges. If they could look past that exterior and see the real Joseph.

How did you approach the congregation?
That Sunday during my sermon I used Joseph as an illustration of how God puts people in our path to stretch us in our faith and call us to greater commitment. I told them he was being released from prison and would need a job and some moral support.

How did the church respond?
Fantastically! A man who was just visiting that morning offered to interview Joseph for a job—which he got. Others offered Christian friendship.

How did you introduce him to the church?
I never publicly said, "This is Joseph Power, an ex-con." I left it up to him to tell whom he wanted. I just took him with me to the various groups and meetings, introducing him as my friend. Joseph has a warm, outgoing personality. From the first he's been faithful in attending church and Bible studies. He cut his hair, trimmed his beard and dressed in a way that made him approachable to our church members. He definitely met us more than half way.

Ministers are busy people. How much time did you actually put into the church relationship with Joseph?
I found three guys in the congregation with a similar passion for people in Joseph's situation. Each of us spent one hour a week with him in discipleship, prayer and just talking. I made it clear to him that he was more than welcome to call or visit me anytime. He has not abused that.

Does helping an ex-prisoner become a huge burden on a few interested people?
We tried not to overload anyone by asking for an intense commitment. Instead, we approached a lot of people to give a little: invite him to lunch after church on Sunday or over to your house for dinner one night.

Out of that people got to know Joseph. He now has a circle of close church friends.

The people in this church have been just terrific. They helped find him an apartment and furnish it, have given him jobs painting their homes and building cottages. And I give just as much credit to Joseph. He's a hard worker; he's been adaptive, friendly, humble and giving in his attitude and actions. It's been a perfect marriage.

What recommendations would you make to other people considering congregational involvement with an ex-prisoner?
Don't go it alone. Surround yourself with people who share enthusiasm for this.

Be available, but make it clear when you are free and when you have other commitments.

Be willing to listen without condemnation. At times Joseph's theology—like any new Christian's—was a little crooked. So we would talk over ideas in a non-threatening way. Joseph's big plus is his enthusiasm and willingness to be taught.

What is your opinion of this approach to ex-prisoner assistance?
I'm thrilled with it. Our church is getting ready to take on someone else. I endorse Prison Fellowship's approach—it's biblical, it's practical and it works.

What has been the greatest benefit?
As Christians we often don't *really* believe what the Gospel can do in people's lives. Joseph has shown us. He has been an inspiration and catalyst to our faith.

Reprinted by permission from the October 1985 issue of Jubilee, *a publication of Prison Fellowship Canada, 2171 Dunwin Drive, Ste. 3, Mississauga, ON L5L 1X2.*

This church is different

Marion Keeney Preheim

Ecumenikos is a GC church that also belongs to four other denominations. Besides the Mennonites, this group relates to the Christian Church (Disciples), United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church and United Presbyterian Church. When the congregation began in 1972, it hoped that four others would not have to start up in Shawnee Mission, Kan., where it located.

With about 50 adults and children, the church is small and meets in homes and rented halls. Its office is in the midst of social service agencies to facilitate hearing of needs and being available for ministry.

From the beginning, Ecumenikos has also been an alternative church for people looking for a different way of experiencing the faith. One way is through having a mission focus each year as part of their covenanting together as a people. The first one in 1981-82 was on availability.

"We invited people to make a pledge that they were going to commit time and dollars over and above what they would usually give by making themselves available to answer whatever mission 'call' came their way," said co-pastor Marilyn Crabtree.

The next year's theme dealt with peacemaking. The three following years built on that with themes on doing peacemaking, loving enemies and the discipleship of loving.

Crabtree indicated that from its first years the congregation was mission oriented. Members were particularly interested in apartment dwellers and in reaching out to singles. Other ministries emerged, such as helping the hungry, working for peace and providing emergency assistance through home visits. The newsletter had articles and dramatic drawings to highlight current causes.

Members are purposefully dispersed to the central city, suburbia and exurbia. They do not receive pay and give mission expenses priority over maintenance costs.

Several church members have been instrumental in developing and helping maintain Franklin Center, a building that was transformed from an abandoned grade school to a thriving community center. It houses a day-care facility, a cooperative grocery, a coffee shop, offices for migrant worker services, a health clinic and meeting rooms. Two Ecumenikos members work full time there, and others have given time, labor, expertise and money to help the various projects.

From the beginning the group has believed in empowering the laity. Three full-time ministers worked together to get the work off the ground, but it was meant from the beginning for this to taper off quickly.

"In the fall of 1978 a community retreat determined that ministerial staff members were needed to give us theological focus and serve as an overview for the community," said Crabtree. "The group decided a team of two from within the church would be ordained to serve up to two years and then be replaced."

Members felt they had an advantage in calling people out of their own congregation because they would not have "hierarchical distance" from them. Jim Crabtree wrote in the newsletter when he was one of the co-pastors, "So I now write not as a beacon to help show the way but as a fellow-holder-of-the-flashlight searching the way."

The group chooses leaders by consensus. They have no chairperson for the congregation. They select officers once a year, inviting everyone to consider volunteering for office.

Their membership process has an individual make a personal statement of faith, called a "membership covenant." People can do it in a variety of ways—written, verbal, painted, baked or whatever they wish. One member, whose hobby was baking cakes, created a "covenant cake" and invited others to help decorate it as a symbol of their participation in her joining the congregation.

They call their worship celebrative. They do a lot of their own music and have created their own songbook with a dozen or more original songs.

When leaders come annually from the five denominations for an evening of learning what Ecumenikos has been doing, the Annual All-Church Conference is done in a worshipful way with a service of singing, sharing and telling about their mission focus for the year. Denominational leaders are invited to share their perspectives and to suggest areas for improvement.

The co-pastors go through all the mail that comes to them from the denominations and process it for their use. The same amount of money is given to each denomination. The special mission appeals and annual offerings are considered.

Marion Keeney Preheim, 1112 Lorna Lane, Newton, KS 67114, is a freelance writer.

Jesus seemed to have a special sensitivity to people who needed his healing touch.

books

Pacifism and politics

Christian Peacemaking & International Conflict: A Realist Pacifist Perspective *by Duane Friesen (Herald Press, 1986, 304 pages)*

Reviewed by Fred Loganbill, Route 2, Newton, KS 67114

At a basic level, this book is Friesen's response to the question of how Christian non-violence can apply to the world of international politics. Aimed at "ordinary lay Christians," Friesen integrates theological, ethical and social science perspectives to compellingly challenge the assumption that war must be accepted as an inevitable consequence and institution of our sin.

In a clear manner, analytical frameworks and examples are presented to explain the foundation and viability of pacifism beyond the domain of the historic peace churches. Difficult issues such as what should be done with the Hitlers of the world and U.S.-Soviet tensions are addressed. To those doubting the relevancy of pacifism in a power-hungry world, Friesen constructively contends that if the nations (and the church) desire realistic peace, then realistically, justice and non-violence must be the means.

At another level, *Christian Peacemaking & International Conflict* appears intended to help give direction to current Mennonite peacemaking efforts. Using numerous Anabaptist references, Friesen responds to two of the oft-repeated social action debates of (1) greater political involvement versus withdrawal and (2) effectiveness versus faithfulness. For Mennonites, Friesen's book should provide a more up-to-date interpretation of what a pacifist/non-resistant stand means today than Guy F. Hershberger's *War, Peace, and Nonresistance.* Also, it provides a helpful and necessary social action companion (with some departures) to John H. Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus.*

Building upon the biblical mandate for the church to be a shalom community with Jesus Christ at the center, Friesen has presented us with a contemporary description of values and actions that mark such a community. (For instance, his section on peacemaking as vocation provides excellent counsel to young people facing career decisions.) However, true to his realistic approach, Friesen is clear that the mandate of justice and non-violence will require great imagination, risk and effort for the church to be faithful and relevant in this nuclear age.

We are left with a valuable book that convincingly succeeds at its insistence that pacifism can and should play a greater role than the church and the world is allowing.

Faith of our mothers

Encircled: Stories of Mennonite Women *by Ruth Unrau (Faith and Life Press, 1986, 352 pages)*

Reviewed by Muriel T. Stackley, 1125 N. Ash, Newton, KS 67114

Who was named Woman Coming Out Holy? Who studied "psychotherapy and bonesetting" in Russia in the 1920s? Who drew the plans, raised the funds, supervised the building and then administered a "home for aged"? Who sat out bomb threats in a dark cellar in China? Who in her retirement has completed 350 oil paintings, half of which have sold? Whose 13 children have spent 70 years in church schools and have with spouses devoted 500 person-years (so far) to various Christian ministries? Who was an hour late for her own wedding because a cloudburst prevented her return from administering emergency medical treatment?

The answers to these questions are (in order): Julia Yellow Horse Shoulderblade (1913-1973), Katharina Ratzlaff Epp (1902-1984), Frieda Kaufman (1883-1944), Wilhelmina Kuyf (1901-1967), Florence White Fluck (1894-), Anna Enns Epp (1902-1958), Caroline Banwar Theodore (1901-1952). The whole stories and 28 more comprise *Encircled.*

Family is a dominant theme in these stories; family is the place where Christian education, musical training and missions are held in high regard. Mothering is also a dominant theme.

Examples abound, and the following are only from the first seven chapters: Verena Sprunger Lehman (1828-1913) taught her eight children to sing in harmony. Hillegonda van der Smissen (1848-1949) translated her loyalty to her birth family to a sisterhood of deaconesses. Anna Wiebe Jantzen and Katharine Kroeker Wiens saw nine out of their combined 17 offspring become overseas missionaries, and this when terms of service were commonly eight years, with few interruptions.

Here is a treasure-trove of program material, sermon illustrations, bedtime reading. As if that weren't enough, these stories are *ours.* Every General Conference Mennonite province and district is represented.

Helper of Salvadorans

In Search of Refuge *by Yvonne Dilling (Herald Press, 1984, 288 pages)*

Reviewed by Christie McKay, 2603 N. Minnesota, North Newton, KS 67117

At age 29 Yvonne Dilling went to work with Salvadoran refugees on the Honduras-El Salvador border in February 1981. *In Search of Refuge* is her moving account of her experiences there until the summer of 1982, when she had to return suddenly to the United States because of lymphatic cancer. She wrote the book while having chemotherapy treatment.

In captivating detail she describes her visit to a mountain slope where Honduran soldiers pushed back 600 Salvadoran women and children who were fleeing Salvadoran National Guard troops during a "clean-up operation." She found the slope still scattered with bones of all sizes. She describes March 19, 1981, when she helped 3,000 Salvadorans, mostly women and children, across the Sumpul River into Honduras while being fired upon by U.S.-made helicopters.

Dilling served as coordinator of the education program for the elementary school age refugees. Sixty percent of the refugees were under age 12.

The refugees' situation seemed to be improving. Then the Honduran soldiers began harassing them. They destroyed people's few possessions while "looking for weapons." Later many of Dilling's Honduran co-workers were killed by the Honduran government. Then the Honduran military announced that the refugees had to move further into Honduras. Many refused to leave and returned to El Salvador. Those who moved faced terrible hardships.

Dilling captures the hopes and fears of the Salvadoran people. *In Search of Refuge* is easy to read and keeps your attention. It is one of the best books I've read. It will be most interesting to those who are up to date on the political situation in Central America, but others will enjoy reading it.

MEDITATION

He is worthy of our best

One June morning in our sixth-grade daily vacation Bible school class, our lesson was on how Jesus loved visiting Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

On an impulse I departed from my lesson plan. I asked this class of nine students what they felt would happen at their house if news came that Jesus was coming for dinner. I've never seen such a flurry of hands.

"Oh, my mother would clean the house extra good," said one girl.

One of the boys volunteered, "I'd mow the lawn carefully so the place would look nice."

"I'd go to my mother's flower garden and pick some beautiful flowers," offered another girl eagerly.

"My mother would use her best tablecloth and the Sunday dishes and silver," remarked another.

As I thought about the various answers, I realized that the best the family had available would be placed at Jesus' disposal.

If we take seriously Christ's great commission of spreading the Good News into all the world, we need more than idle promises. Talk is cheap. Action costs.

Stop at the dawn of a new day, while it is still fresh, to make plans with God's guidance as to how the day should be spent.

We knew when we made our commitment to Christ that his demands should come first—that we seek his kingdom above all else. Take an inventory as to whether you have fulfilled that vow.

The Bible tells us that even King David would not offer to the Lord burnt offerings that did not cost him anything. That premise still has not changed. Only our best is good enough for someone who sent the best he had—his Son—to die in our place.

Helen Friesen

A plea for living wills

Medical science is my shepherd:
I shall not want.
It maketh me to lie down in hospital beds;
It leadeth me beside the marvels of technology.
It restoreth my brain waves;
It maintains me in a persistent vegetative
    state for its name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
    shadow of death,
I shall find no end to life;
For thou art with me;
Thy respirator and heart machine sustain me.
Thou preparest intravenous feeding for me
In the presence of irreversible disability;
Thou anointest my head with oil;
My cup runneth on and on and on and on.
Surely coma and unconsciousness shall follow me all
    the days of my continued breathing;
And I will dwell in the intensive-care unit forever.

Reverend Robert Fraser, Unitarian Church of Rockville, Md.—read by Gov. Richard Lamm at the MHA sessions in Denver March 4.

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What does it mean to be well and whole? Where do you find yourself accepted as one total being?

Health costs consume a staggering portion of the GNP in the United Stated and Canada. And most of that money is spent to care for illness or for sick people.

What if we would direct our resources more to a ministry of promoting wellness?

Jesus seemed to respond to the total needs of people. It is a challenge for us in today's world to do the same.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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editorial

A switch knob tests my loyalty

Last December we took our car in for repairs. Among the things broken was one switch where the knob had come off. Most of us know the irritation of a switch without a handle. You can live with it (and operate a car), but you are reminded of the problem each time you use it.

They fixed our car and even did a good job. Except for one thing—that switch. It was put on order and we were assured it would arrive in a few weeks.

The car went back in that same shop a couple of times—for regular maintenance and for minor repairs. Each time I left a note, reminding them to install the switch knob if it was in.

About four months ago, when we noticed that the car came back again without the knob, I asked about it. They again took down the numbers from their big auto manual, showed them to me and assured us it would be only a few weeks.

Two months later we serviced the car, and when we picked it up, still no switch knob. I sent a memo to the service manager, along with a copy of one of the orders. Because I had to be on the road, I urged him to tell my wife, Marge, what was taking so long.

He gave Marge a friendly call and told her that, due to some "internal communications problems," the part had never been ordered. Now he had ordered it and would personally see the job through.

Several weeks later, now just over a month ago, he called Marge while I was away again. The part had arrived and they were ready to install it when she could bring in the car. She works only a few blocks from the shop and volunteered it for a whole day, at their convenience, and asked them to look after a couple of other small repairs then too. That seemed mutually beneficial, and they agreed on the day.

Near the end of the day, Marge walked over to pick up the car. She checked out the minor repairs; everything was beautiful. Then she went to the switch. You guessed it—no knob. But it was at the heart of why the car was there. Since it was quitting time, no one at the service desk seemed to know anything about it. The work order was stamped over "install switch parts in stock"—PARTS ON ORDER.

A quick call to the service desk the next morning brought the reply, "Yes, that part is lying here. Even has your name on it. When do you want to bring in the car so we can install it?" (This was the morning after they had the car all day.)

Marge was upset (even I was surprised at the strength of her response) and said, "I don't want to bring it again. Isn't it time you come and get it?" Their reply: "We can't do that."

That's the situation I found when I came home, and as of this writing, we still put up with the aggravation of that knobless switch. We feel they should make the next move, but there has been no contact. I've been tempted to go to another garage, but to date all the repair and service on that car has been done at this place. It's hard to give up on them. However, it's been several weeks and we haven't called them, nor have they called us.

Seems too ridiculous to fuss and fume over a switch knob?

But how could they "mess up" for half a year? When do you switch rather than keep on hassling?

It's a tough decision for me. As a conference moderator (for Manitoba's 50 GC churches) and as editor of *The Mennonite*, I hear fellow believers asking the same thing about loyalties. And they can list what seem to them considerably more significant failings than a switch knob. Why did you use that photo? Why didn't you come down more straight? Why doesn't the conference denounce all tongue-speaking? Why don't you use the New King James Version of the Bible?

And I expect these people to remain loyal? Do I truly believe Jesus meant for them and for me to forgive 70 times seven times (Matthew 18:22)? Is the Lord calling me to be his witness to such irresponsible action by that garage? Is this part of that wholistic approach to life that Ropp and Kipp write about?

There goes the phone. Could this be them? If not, should I call them tomorrow? Or today? Like right now? *Note: I dropped my pen and dialed, but the line was busy. When I got home, there was a note in the mail. The next morning they called. Yes, God's Spirit works even about switch knobs. Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:15 AUGUST 12, 1986

inside this issue:

Jesus came and healed me

Life finds channels in illness

First Saskatoon '86 reports

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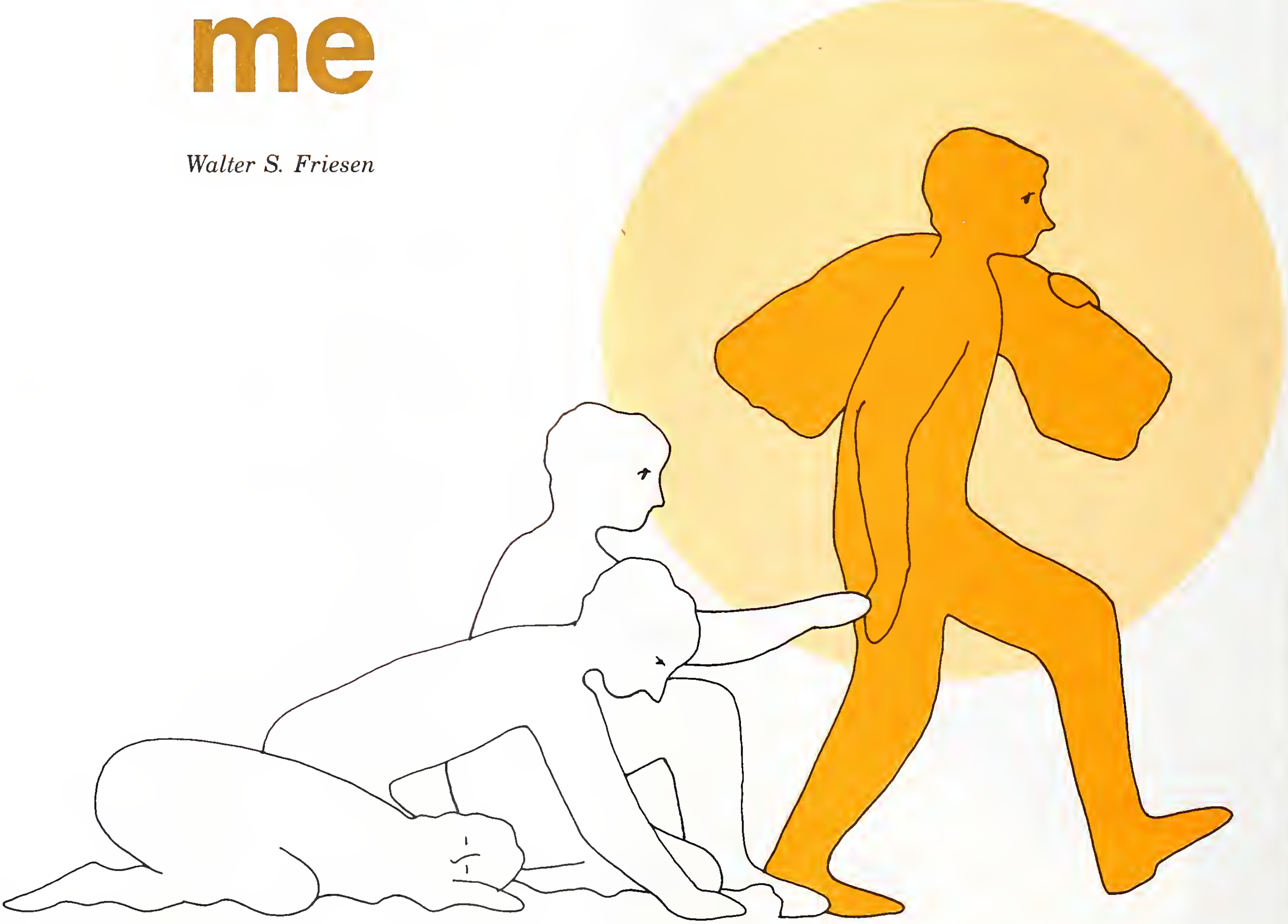
Jesus came and healed me

Walter S. Friesen

One day Jesus was coming toward Jerusalem through the suburb of Bethesda. Now Bethesda was a resort village which featured hot sulphur springs. Hot mineral water would brim up from deep beneath the surface of the earth and flood a small pool which had been carved out of the limestone by centuries of water action. Whoever got in the pool when it was filled got better of whatever was ailing. Several entrepreneurs—graduates of Bluffton and Bethel—had recognized the tremendous business potential of the hot springs and had erected five motels bordering the pool, one each for the five Books of Moses. The rich people reserved rooms and were, of course, regularly assisted into the pool for timely treatment of their hurts and ailments. The poor were obliged to wait on sleeping mats for an occasional chance to get into the healing water when it was not fully occupied by the more affluent.



“Get up. . . . There’s no magic coming. You can wait here another 38 years, rotting. But . . . you are loved unconditionally. You are cherished and you are significant just the way you are. . . .”

One such poor man had been there a long time—38 years to be exact—waiting for his slim chance at healing. He was an altogether pitiable creature, having become listless and understandably cynical about living. Somehow, day after day, he would drag himself to the pool to await his chance. The name of this poor fellow was Walter Friesen.

So on this day, which was just like a thousand others before it, I was lying on my sleeping bag as close to the pool as I was allowed to come, waiting for my chance at healing.

Suddenly a shadow crossed my face and a man appeared, looking down at me. After what seemed like a long time—even to me, accustomed as I was to long, dreary moments—the man spoke to me. “Walter, what are you doing here? Do you want to be well?”

That was a tough question, and it aroused profound resentment and anger in me. When I saw that he wasn’t walking away with a taunting look on his face, as so many others had done through the years, it became clear to me that the man was waiting for me to respond.

“Sir,” I said, “Sir! What do you mean, asking me if I want to be well? Isn’t that clear from the fact that day after day I drag myself and my mat over here to the pool to wait for my chance to get into the water?” I was indignant to the core of my being and went on.

“Look, man, I didn’t ask to be born and I sure didn’t ask for my crippling disease. You don’t seem to understand. I’m not responsible for my condition.”

The man didn’t speak or move, so I went on with my tirade. “You see, I was born near Garden City, Kan., right at the beginning of the Great Depression, right at the start of a 10-year drought and the horrible dust bowl, in which my father suffered 10 successive crop failures. I was the last one of the six kids born into this poor Mennonite family. My father lost his courage, and in 1940 he sold the whole farm for $12 an acre to the Morton Salt Company. In August the 23 remaining chickens and we five children, along with a few pieces of furniture, were packed up in a trailer pulled by a 1928 Hudson and we moved to Meade, Kan., 100 miles down the road. There God was walled in and the devil was walled out and we were outsiders halfway between.

“And then I went to Meade Bible Academy, where I graduated valedictorian with a B average in a class of 13. What’s more I had acne, and you know what that does to an adolescent’s psyche. And when I was growing up, our only vehicle was a beat-up 1936 Ford without hubcaps and springs poking through the seats. You know I couldn’t get any dates with that kind of trap. The circumstances, you see, were all against me. I’m not really responsible for my lame condition. Don’t you see that? Finally I went off to Tabor College, and it wasn’t even accredited. . . .”

“Get up!” The man fairly shouted at me, interrupting my tirade and bending down low to me. Then suddenly, with a tone of tender sadness replacing the insistent, intense interruption, he went on. “Get up, Walt Friesen. I’ve got news for you. There’s no magic coming. You can wait here another 38 years, rotting. But I’ll tell you this: You are loved unconditionally. You are cherished and you are significant just the way you are. Get up, I say, roll up your bed, say yes to your life, to your acne-pocked nose, to your dim hearing, to your big feet, to your Mennonite history, to your quick temper, to your neurotic need to have everyone love you, to your empty daydream past. Get up, roll up your life, put it on your shoulder—and walk. For I can tell you that the Messiah you are waiting for does not exist.”

And then, just as suddenly as he had appeared, he was gone—without a farewell.

I lay huddled on my sleeping bag a long time, sobbing my heart out. Then with poignant ambivalence I slowly rolled up my mat, rolled it up, put it on my right shoulder and breathlessly wobbled to my feet.

Standing there, for the first time, I was nearly overcome with both wonder and doubt. I could not believe it. Then, ever so carefully, I took a tottering step forward.

No sooner had I stepped out into my life than a fierce and authoritarian old man with a long beard and a fine robe met me, confronted me dead in my tracks. “What are you doing, you miserable wretch, walking with your bed on your shoulders on the Sabbath Day? Don’t you know that is against the Holy Laws?”

I was dumbfounded. Sabbath had not entered my mind. Here I was moving forward, walking, for the first time in my life—and it was against the law.

“Rabbi, you don’t understand,” I began brokenly. “A man came to me a little while ago as I was waiting by the pool here for my chance at healing. The man asked if I wanted to be well, so I told him my story. Then the man told me to get up and . . . and to put my bed on my shoulders . . . and walk. Just like that, and then he was gone. Well, I finally did what he bid me do, and here I am walking for the first time in my life. And please, Rabbi, please understand, the man told me to walk with my bed, with my life, on my shoulders. I . . . I think it’s the *only* way I can walk. I mean, I think that’s what the man meant . . . and . . . .”

“Who told you to walk with your bed on your shoulders?” the authority demanded sharply, interrupting my story before I was finished.

Now that was a surprising question. I didn’t know. The man didn’t say his name, didn’t give me a calling card or a gospel tract. “I really have no idea at all what his name is,” I said to the authority.

This seems to suggest that when Love comes crashing through the barriers with its accompanying Truth, it is utterly, utterly beyond all doctrines, creeds, formulas and rituals. It was clear to me that I had responded to a spiritual, personal presence, not to some abstract idea to believe in.

I persisted, with my bed, to walk toward the Great Temple, where I was preparing to make an offering to God just as I had promised a thousand mornings in a row that I would if ever I were healed. Then, in the courtyard of the temple, the man who spoke to me saw me and came to me. He said, with that profound expression of love which was still ringing fresh in me, “Walter. Sin no more. Don’t try to be Chester Fast or Orlando Wiebe or your brother Harry. You be Walter Friesen, a man whom God loves.” And then he was lost again in the crowd.

I persisted and asked about the man. Finally a young girl told me the answer. “You mean you don’t know him? He’s my friend. His name is Jesus of Nazareth. He is the Christ.”

Through a flood of tears running over my contorted cheeks I began to praise him from the depths of my heart, for I knew that the transformation begun that day would never end. This Jesus was *my* friend, and because of him, I had become my own friend too.

Walter S. Friesen, 430 W. Ninth St., Denver, CO 80204, is pastor at First Mennonite Church. Walt shared this personalized version of John 5:1-18 as part of a workshop on “preparing health-care workers,” during the annual Mennonite Health Association convention March 1-4 at Denver.

Life finds channels in illness

Bob McVety

"Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called. . ." (1 Timothy 6:12).

Ordained minister, hospital visitor, I now find myself on the other side of the regulation hospital blanket. I know what it is like to be visited in a little green room. I notice how people's eyes are drawn, against their will, to the intravenous bag, the sloppy hospital gown, the Band-Aid stuck rakishly among the hairs on my arm. People need not be embarrassed to look at our strange appearance. We who are sick share the same fascination with the paraphernalia of our condition.

Hospital life initiates the patient into all sorts of mysteries. I now claim firsthand acquaintance with urine collection, blood pressure cuffs and the sounds of hospital corridors at 3 a.m.

I have listened to elderly brothers and sisters resume their pleas for attention the second a night nurse leaves their side. I've been wrenched from sleep as neighbors call out for parents and friends long dead. My breath still catches in my throat when I hear a lonely soul beg God for death and peace.

I am a lupus patient. My body has turned on itself. We are fighting mightily, my doctors and nurses and I. A Methodist in spiritual inheritance, I must now learn to be Methodist in the care of my body. Regular habits of rest and exercise, and the scrupulous avoidance of the sun—these will be some of my disciplines for the rest of my journey with chronic illness.

The mixture of saint and devil in us all saves hospital life from becoming a non-stop existential crisis. I've chortled into my pillow as the nurses gallop merrily down the hall. They are answering the bull-moose roar of their most difficult patient. This time, in a tirade about "the d--- nurses," he has managed to do a slow-motion slide onto the floor. There he fumes in a tangle of bedding. He has presented himself, his mattress and his dignity to be an unreasonable and still-very-much-alive sacrifice. He is not hurt; neither is he amused. He rants. He swears. He will sue.

Another patient warns his overworked nurse that if she does not assist him at once he will be quite dead in five minutes. To make his point he pantomimes collapse. Laughter wins over patience in the nurse's voice as she assures him that the end is hardly at hand. His dour prophecy will not be fulfilled (for the moment) in one of history's greater deathbed scenes.

Smile as we may at the irascibility of other patients, we who are sick must confess to the same darkness in us. I am humbled by the anti-social tendencies I am discovering within myself. Sometimes people—even the ones I love—are too much. Some of my former parishioners will never understand why I was not enthusiastic at times about their visits and phone calls. The truth is that I was fighting to live. Small-talk skills deserted me. My ulcerated mouth hurt with every word.

Being truly present to a seriously ill person is among the hardest of human tasks. What should we say? How should we act? My advice, *Be real, be caring, be brief.* One night, when I was too close to the world-to-come, a priest friend stood near my bed and said gently, "I can see that you are very sick. So I'm going to pray and then I'll leave." That was just right. I knew he cared.

The aperture closed,
but not before I learned
that dying itself
is not terrible.

Another hospital encounter did not have the same grace. I cannot remember all that happened; I was heavily sedated. I do know that someone I value glanced at me furtively, mumbled a couple of wisecracks and scurried away. My friend muttered something about calling me at Christmas. Needless to say, the phone call did not come, not at Christmas and not since.

Some of us find serious illness too repugnant to face. We do not want to see it or hear about it. Thus it happens that friends disappear. The easy banter between two people who once cared evaporates. Spouses contemplate divorce.

Not everyone reacts this way, thank God. By some mercy, love triumphs over revulsion. People I love have agonized to face my situation. I've wept at their warmth, their thoughtfulness, their loyalty. I have shared their awkward silence. I've chuckled at their jokes and cheer-me-up gags (even when laughing hurt). In amazing ways, and more than they know, they have helped me.

Now that I'm doing much better, these same people continue to phone and write. Some have traveled great distances to see me. All I can say is, "Thank you. Please don't stop, ever."

Medical people are just as gifted and as limited in their ability to respond to the sick. I'll always remember the weary look on the face of a doctor who said, "Your symptoms are just too nonspecific to be treated." I sensed that he was also saying, "You are a hypochondriac." A few weeks later I nearly died.

There was a different look in the eyes of some young nursing assistants who carried me back to bed after I collapsed in the bathroom. I'll not forget their tenderness.

Just as much I'll treasure the practical caring of my rheumatologist. Within minutes of meeting me, Dr. Alfonso Verdejo of Regina was rapidly assessing the mundane details of my situation. What about my work? What about money? Sometimes the face of compassion is this-worldly and concrete. Happy are those who understand that truth.

The experience of serious illness works subtle changes in our perspective. Donut shops get more of my business than they once did. Sunrises evoke fresh wonder in my prairie soul. Bills demand to be paid today. Cherished friendships grow deeper. Family ties strengthen. Broken relationships cry out for healing. Confession is no longer a mere religious form. Time to be quiet becomes imperative.

Changes take place in my body that I cannot stem by will power or positive thought. Transformations unfold according to some law that does not respect the human ego and its need to master reality. I feel oneness with the inexorable movement of the seasons. My heart comprehends what my mind cannot grasp: why geese gather to journey south and flowers fade and seedpods form. Children have always delighted me with their honesty and their smiles. Now I borrow strength from the unabashed thirst for life that will carry most of them to mature years.

Once upon a time I loved to be busy. I welcomed a crowded schedule. I liked to walk fast and think even faster. Today I watch people my age go at life with that same kind of energy. I wonder if they know how blessed they are.

As I surrender the vitality of youth, I sense aching kinship with people I hardly noticed before. These days, I travel—not unhappily—with those who are obliged to move in life's slow lane, the folk who count stairs and appreciate elevators. I am aware, as never before, of the limping walk, the stooped back, the twisted hand.

There was a time when I thought life was structured between the alternation of working days and vacations. But there are other rhythms by which to mark the passage of time: Life can be lived between medications, doctor's appointments and treatments.

I find to my surprise that in the alternate time frame of illness, the goodness of life does not die. It searches for new forms. Human creativity is irrepressible: If blocked in one way, it finds other channels to travel and new deserts to make green.

I do not mean these words to sound triumphant. As much as others, ill people must confront the hideous changes that their condition brings: the anger, the limitations, the sense of loss. We dare not silence the difficult questions that pursue us without mercy. Should the unmarried abandon hope of marriage and family? Should the ill parent even consider having more children? What about the healthy spouse? Is it fair to impose on him or her the limits of the sick partner?

The ill, especially the young, need to look honestly at the future. What of the dreams we cherish, the plans we are making? The other day I rejoiced to hear a fellow sufferer say, "Sometimes I feel very old." I know what he means. I have tried to tell well people the same thing. They do not hear me. They argue, "Don't be silly. You're still young." They are right, of course, in their way. My birth certificate declares I have years left in my three-score-and-10. My feelings say otherwise.

I have been ushered into the penultimate room of death. I was drawn to the gentle humming. I saw the way open to another world. In my gut I felt the energy and the invitation of that world. It beckoned. "Not yet," I said. "Not right now." The aperture closed, but not before I learned that dying itself is not terrible. The pain may be ghastly, but we will be guided. We will know our role. We will not be alone.

September leaves tumble,
yielding to the earth
that made them,
yellow and full,
their work done.

And I, growing to greenness
in spite of myself,
taught by suffering,
strangely strong in my weakness,
I too am learning to die.
Thanks be to God.

Bob McVety, 109-20 Kleisinger Crescent, Regina, SK S4R 7M3, is a former member of the ministry team at Knox-Metropolitan United Church, Regina. His article appeared in The Observer, *April 1986. It is reprinted with Bob's permission.*

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

An elegant retirement

Calvin Redekop

A while back (March 25 issue) I proposed that it was as important to know what to do when one retires as getting there. I did not speak to the question of how that meaningful retirement stage can be achieved.

Here is my personal recipe for a meaningful "twilight" age:

1. Have a formal and joyous TV burning ceremony at an early age—maybe 40, if not before.
2. Take a four-week MCC VS assignment, preferably in Cachipay, Colombia, around age 45. If you have a spouse, leave him or her at home. A few weeks apart may teach you how much you have taken the spouse for granted and you will be freer to learn something about what the larger world is really like.
3. When you near the 50 mark, take a course in Chinese art. You never know, Chinese art may be a good thing to know in 30 years.
4. By the time you reach 55 you will be hardened enough to take a trip to Australia, especially the "outback," where you will learn what space is and why the kangaroo has developed such long hind legs, doing 10 feet on a bound. (Where do you think the "outback" got its name?)
5. Around 60, the bones may need a bit of warmth to stay limber. A winter VS tour of duty in Tucson, Ariz., will help that. You may also rub elbows with Mexicans, at least enough to learn a rainbow of tastes in food.
6. Soon after this, at 62 (maybe even earlier), begin cutting back in the rat race and start spending your children's inheritance (more on this sore point later sometime) to travel or to start that little business you have always wanted.
7. To keep your muscle tone, take up skiing around 68 or so. Your spouse may kick a bit on this one, but if you are worth having around, the spouse will finally get on skis too and enjoy them.
8. When you reach 70 and beyond, you still have plenty of time to do your own version of Grandma Moses or Colonel Sanders. If you don't think you have the talent to paint, just visit the nearest modern art gallery. Or if you don't think you know the restaurant business, listen to this. A friend traveled all over South America recently. Everywhere he asked for fried frog legs, and he didn't get one plateful. The world still hasn't had its fill of variations on Colonel Sanders.
9. Around 80 you can always start thinking of your great-grandchildren. Little benches and chairs make useful gifts, and they will quickly become coveted heirlooms.

"Wait a minute," you say. "You're kidding. The things you mention have been done by people I know." Exactly. I have written my personal philosophy of preparing for life by merely observing what creative people around me have done. The point is, doing some of the things above in a methodical fashion prepares the way for those twilight years to be happy and meaningful.

"The child is the father of the man," I was told in an educational philosophy class at Goshen College. And I say, "The man (woman) is the father (mother) of the golden-maned prince (princess)." People who have understood this philosophy have been so happy and occupied that they hardly had time to attend their own funerals.

But there may still be a few skeptics. What does living a meaningful and graceful life into the older years have to do with our Christian faith? Isn't our life here merely a choosing of life after death (with a few heavy temptations thrown in)?

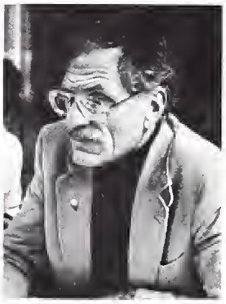
Isn't getting older merely the process of being herded into a "detention center" until the vaunted silver-haired warden (St. Peter) calls our names?

The New Testament is not replete with references to living a meaningful old age. Even the apostle Paul yearned to "slough off this mortal coil" and head for home. The Old Testament does better, urging an "honoring of father and mother," which somehow is connected with a long life. But we have evolved (advanced) a great deal since that epoch.

Maybe our unclarity about the meaning and value of aging is because the gospel has not been clearly understood. Or is it really missing? One of the few references to "old" in the New Testament refers to old (good) wine; but we had better drop that reference.

Taking a running leap at a wholistic understanding of the gospel, I agree with Augustine, who (I think) said, "The chief aim of people is to love God and to serve him forever."

This vision can be best fulfilled by people with some experience and wisdom about what love and service is all about. The older people I have known usually exude a demeanor void of all pretense and "respect of persons." Recently I visited with a man who was then 98 (he has now celebrated his 99th) and mused about getting married again. The all-too-short fellowship will not leave my mind and memory. He shared a mellowed love that permeated my understanding of what it means to love God and serve him.



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Before things get better, they'll get worse —Habakkuk 1:5-17

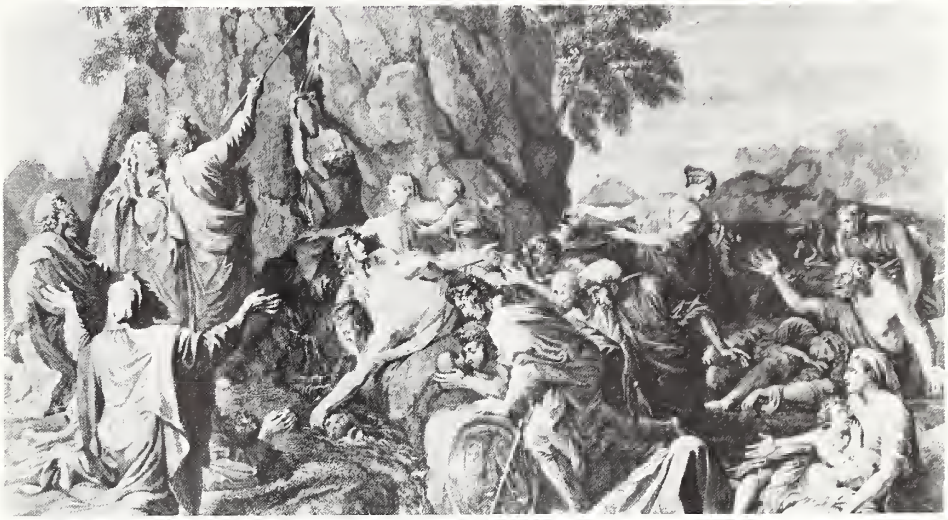
Thomas Finger

The prophet Habakkuk wrote around 625-600 B.C., not long before the fall of Jerusalem in 587. Like his contemporary, Jeremiah, Habakkuk was deeply disturbed by the worsening moral and social condition of his people. This situation raised disturbing questions of faith. God was supposed to be a God of justice, yet "justice never goes forth" (Habakkuk 1:3). God was supposed to protect the righteous, yet "the wicked surround the righteous" (2:3). Habakkuk poured out his perplexity before God, yet God seemed not to hear (1:2).

The opening section of Habakkuk (1:1-4) raises a question which deeply moves people today: "Why does a loving God permit evil?" Like many modern people, Habakkuk feels he has raised it repeatedly without answer. Finally, in verses 5-11, God responds. As is often true with us, however, Habakkuk finds God's answer confusing, and not really what he had in mind. Accordingly, in the remainder of chapter one (vv. 12-17), the prophet raises further questions and objections.

God begins to answer Habakkuk by telling him to direct his attention elsewhere. Like many people in agonizing circumstances, Habakkuk had probably pondered his situation repeatedly, hoping to find some solution by analyzing it in depth. Yet the more he directed his attention toward his problems, the less able he was to raise his vision beyond them. Consequently, God tells Habakkuk, Don't focus on Judah, but "look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded" (1:5). The solution to Judah's problems will not come from Judah but from what God is doing on a much broader scale.

This new perspective hardly solves all of Habakkuk's problems. Earlier he had expected God to somehow exercise justice within Judah so that she might be the holy nation God desired. But now he learns that the Chaldeans (or Babylonians) are going to march on Judah (1:6). They will come swiftly like leopards (1:8). Nothing shall stand in their way (1:10). But this means that Jerusalem will be conquered.



On Israel's Exodus journey, Moses brought forth water from a rock. But the complaints of the people continued, in spite of God's deliverance from exile.

For Habakkuk this answer only increases his perplexity as to how God can permit evil. For God is the "Holy One" (1:12). God's eyes, he had always believed, are too pure to behold evil (1:13). How then can God simply look on, like a spectator, while these wicked pagans "swallow up" those who are more righteous than they (1:13)?

Habakkuk is thrown into greater doubt as to how God governs humanity. Chapter one provides deep insight into the inner attitudes of world-conquering powers. Their only real god is their own might (1:11). Having no respect for higher laws, they define justice however they want (1:7). If they worship anything, it is the weapons by which they gain their wealth (1:16). But if God is just, how can he let such powers go on "mercilessly slaying nations forever" (1:17)? How can God allow humankind to behave "like crawling things that have no ruler" (1:14)?

Habakkuk began with the agonizing question of how God could permit evil. But when God begins to answer, Habakkuk's problem seems not to get better but worse. At first he wondered why God permitted injustice and violence in Judah. Now he learns that Judah will be violently destroyed. Yet throughout his life Habakkuk has believed that Jerusalem is the apple of God's eye. He has often sung hymns such as we find in Psalm 48: Zion, God's "holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth. . . . Within her citadels God has shown himself a sure defense."

Yet God now tells the prophet that Jerusalem, which God has founded and defended, will be destroyed. To Habakkuk, not only does this seem to mean the end of his people. It seems the God who has always been the bedrock of his trust is no longer faithful to his promises or to himself.

When we finish chapter one we may feel disturbed. Habakkuk has raised honest questions. But not only is God at first silent, God's eventual answers throw the prophet into deeper doubt. Yet if we are honest, we must acknowledge that in times of crisis things often get worse before they get better. God does not always resolve crises in simple, obvious ways. God's way of responding often demands we wrestle with our questions in even deeper ways. Next time we will see how Habakkuk keeps on wrestling. *Second study in a series on Habakkuk*

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I chose a Mennonite college

Barry Bartel

For a number of years I had been anticipating going to college in preparation for law school. And I was fairly sure that I would go to Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.). During my senior year in high school another possibility developed. I was selected as a finalist for the Boettcher Foundation Scholarship. The scholarship pays all expenses for four years of college but must be used in a Colorado school. I remembered friends telling me that they wouldn't trade their years at Bethel for anything. But how could I pass up such a scholarship? I was a Boettcher alternate and came to Bethel. I have never regretted it.

Bethel's exceptionally strong program and small size exposed me to new things and made it possible for me to reshape my career plans. I soon changed my sights from law school to peace studies and conflict resolution opportunities. My Mennonite background and my personal belief system found both support and challenge. This was a helpful learning balance made possible by a Mennonite college with 60 percent of its students from Mennonite background. I also learned to know and love Brenda, who has become my life partner.

In May 1985 I graduated from Bethel College. My Bethel experience gave me the opportunity to expand my views of the world through being exposed to a variety of viewpoints and interacting with people from different backgrounds and with different beliefs. I was able to pursue interests in maths, computer science, religious studies, peace studies and music. A Mennonite college makes available the contact with the broader Mennonite network through its students, faculty, classes and special speakers like no other school can. Exposure to church programs and learning to know leaders serving the church has made Brenda and me excited to pursue church and service work. Friendships fostered at Bethel will last a lifetime. Now I too would not trade my years at Bethel for anything.

Barry Bartel, Box 25, North Newton, KS 67117, is the author of Communication Skills and Conflict Resolution *(Faith and Life Press). He and Brenda are MCC workers in Haiti.*

The choice of school that you make will influence many other things in your life. How are you choosing?

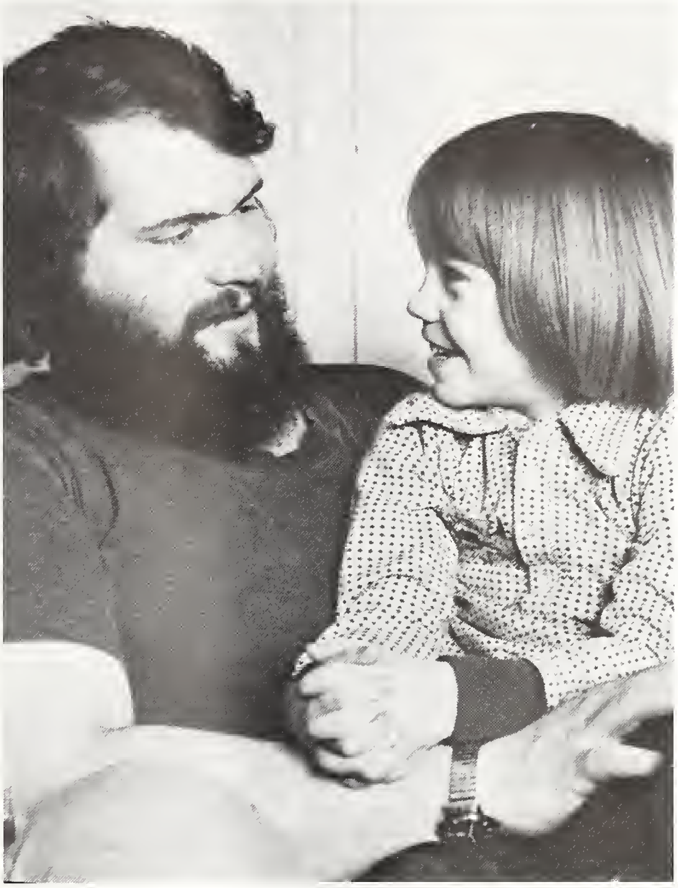
These roots were made for walking

John Schrag

The cutting edge of technology is running rampant in today's industry. Many are boasting "state of the art" achievements. Never have there been more available opportunities for the aggressive, creative explorer.

We in the church are in a parallel opportunity zone for developing relationships, trust and friendships. We are presently just nibbling at the cutting edge of humanity, stimulating an appetite for a larger piece of the action. Our warehouses are full of creative thoughts and proven skills. Most of us include in our travel kit a generous supply of patience and understanding. But there is one ingredient that is seldom on hand. That ingredient is our ability and willingness for interaction and sharing of ourselves with each other.

From early childhood it is evident that happenings occur in sequential order. One learns to crawl before attempting to walk. When we fall, we want someone to help us stand back up. It also becomes evident that to get attention all we need to do is exercise our vocal chords in an ear-splitting scream. We can gain recognition by learning to say "mama" and "daddy" and even broaden our popularity simply by adding "bye bye" to our vocabulary. Another way to gain almost immediate attention is to crawl into an empty room and sit quietly for just a few minutes when there's an adult in the house.



"Our warehouses are full of creative thoughts and proven skills. . . . But . . . one ingredient . . . is seldom on hand. That ingredient is our ability and willingness for interaction and sharing of ourselves with each other."

In just a few short months one starts developing motor skills and becomes proud of one's accomplishments. Soon no help is needed to stand back up; no help is *wanted* to stand back up. Independence has been born. As one matures and develops senses, creativity and self-discovery, the desire to be independent becomes forceful and is encouraged by our tutors. We groom and mold our independence so it can be called on to help control our actions and reactions. Our proficiency is so successful that we find it volunteering its control even before we solicit its presence. This stage in life could well have been the era of the quote, "Why be disagreeable when with very little more effort you could be really obnoxious?"

So it is also in our quest for spiritual maturity. One longs for help, and the entire sequence of feelings and efforts begin to recycle. There are moments when one has the urge to exercise one's vocal chords loudly or to retreat into an empty room silently. At this point progress in developing maturity is difficult to measure. Creativity and spiritual growth seem distant and evasive, but independence has taken root and stands tall and proud. We no longer display the freedom to ask for help, advice or companionship. We stubbornly falter and miserably fail at many attempts and involvements.

Our challenge or opportunity today, our "big bite" into the cutting edge of humanity may come through expanded use of our time and talent. Just imagine severing your roots of independence and feeling the flow of freedom and fulfillment when someone is there to help you "stand back up." The next time you recognize an opportunity for sharing through minor home repair, sewing, transportation, visitation, advice on what your potential employer looks for, hobbying or whatever, invite someone to your door and ask for help or make yourself available to help someone else. God's kingdom on earth can't grow if we retreat into an empty room by ourselves.

We need to explore parallel interests and hobbies and develop shared-interest partnerships within our congregations. Our joys would be multiplied and our relationships could be drawn to new levels.

This concept challenges our independence, but the hidden potential enticed me to write this article. The effect of God's love shared with each other, celebrating the positive and cushioning the negative, rings with such magnitude it could easily start an epidemic.

John Schrag, Route 2, Box 1538, Newton, KS 67114, is a free-lance writer.

Sexuality discussion intense

Saskatoon '86 delegates debate and worship

Saskatoon—Delegates to the 44th triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church, held here July 21-27, debated several issues between times of worship, instruction and visiting. The sessions were held in the Field House on the University of Saskatchewan campus.

The registration total of 2,442 included 1,681 adults, 505 youth and 256 children. The youth participated in their own conference elsewhere on the university campus, while children ages 4-13 had programs at nearby Camp Shekinah, Rosthern Youth Farm Camp and the School for the Deaf. Many youth joined the adults in some of the sessions.

U.S. Assembly. On the first day of the conference the U.S. Assembly, born three years earlier at Bethlehem, Pa., met for the afternoon. The meeting included reports on Native American concerns, evangelism and church planting, U.S. Council, inter-Mennonite concerns, and peace and justice. Bob Hull, secretary of peace and justice in the Commission on Home Ministries, expressed his concern about new U.S. Selective Service policies on alternative service, which is to be under military personnel.

The farm crisis received much attention. In a devotional S. Roy Kaufman, Pulaski, Iowa, spoke of "the imperialist takeover of the land by short-term interests." Lester Ewy of Kansas, who with his wife, Winifred, serves as farm community issues coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee, called on Mennonites to speak out, to work together and unite faith and economics.

The assembly passed two resolutions, one opposing the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative, the other describing actions taken by various churches on behalf of refugees from Central America and asking more congregations to become involved in bringing justice to that region. A dissenting statement on the SDI resolution was read on behalf of Ronald Rich, Bluffton, Ohio, but it passed by large majority.

In a later session Mary Mae Schwartzendruber, Kitchener, Ont., expressed regret that Canadians were not included in the discussion on Central America.

Ivorie Lowe leads in a litany at the opening session.

Human sexuality. Much of the business sessions, which began Tuesday afternoon, focused on discussion of the human sexuality committee's report and a resolution brought by the conference's General Board. *Human Sexuality in the Christian Life: a Working Document for Study and Dialogue* was sent by the committee to congregations for study last fall. The document was affirmed by nearly all who spoke of it, yet only 43 congregations reported having studied it. General Board member Richard Early, Souderton, Pa., among others chided congregations for not taking the time to study and discuss the document.

The discussion included statements by several gays who are members of General Conference churches. Frank Trnka, Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, was affirmed by his pastor, Myron Schrag, as a Christian brother. Lynn Keenan, Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, said she resigned from six years as associate director of Mennonite Voluntary Service after hearing people in churches "label gays with child abusers and murderers. . . . I will not leave silently, as many have done and will do." She said she is one of many gays in the conference who serve as pastors, missionaries, administrators and Sunday school teachers.

For many it was the first time they had heard directly from a gay person. Elizabeth Dueck, Chilliwack, B.C., expressed shock and asked, "How does a person become a homosexual?"

Responses ranged from those calling for accepting homosexuals without distinguishing the person from the practice to those saying the answers are clear in the Bible and don't need discussion. But most expressed the need for dialogue to continue and for people to love the person, as Jeanne Zook, Portland, Ore., said, "but not accept the behavior."

Don Longbottom, Moundridge, Kan., asked gays to extend to heterosexuals the same grace they expect to receive. Keith Schrag, Ames, Iowa, affirmed people listening to each other, which "helps us to grow."

Peter Ediger, Arvada, Colo., said that there's a homosexual in every extended family. Linda Mierau, Goshen, Ind., told of her pain in another area and said, "The church is often one of the last places where we can say how much we hurt."

Lynn Keenan

After meeting in small groups, participants differed about whether to pass a resolution on sexuality or not. "Let's not act hastily," advised Mary Steuben, Spokane, Wash.

The discussion continued on Thursday afternoon, during what had been scheduled as "free time." The General Board's resolution on sexuality (see May 27 issue) was moved and seconded. GB member Jake Harms, Winnipeg, said the resolution "calls us toward oneness." Although the resolution opposes homosexual practice, he said, it "does not deny room for homosexual orientation or for [gays'] participation in our churches."

Twenty-eight responses later, representing those for and against the resolution, Joe Neufeld, Regina, introduced an amendment that changed some of the wording of the resolution. GC president Jake Tilitzky, who chaired the meeting, ruled it a substitute resolution. Confusion about parliamentary procedure followed. A tabling motion was withdrawn, then someone moved to defer the action until the next day. Many seemed tired of the discussion and disgruntled by the motion being put off.

On Friday, Neufeld announced that he had withdrawn his substitute motion. Byron Weber-Becker, Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., introduced an amendment from his congregation that included a statement that "we acknowledge disagreement among us as to the meaning of Christian faithfulness for homosexually oriented brothers and sisters."

Again statements for and against the amendment were heard. Among these was Lori Preheim, Newton, Kan., who spoke for a group of youth. They agreed that "voting is not a workable solution."

The amendment was defeated by a vote of 1,167 to 404.

After a break Lynn Keenan moved to table the resolution. The motion was defeated in a hand vote. Floyd Bartel, Newton, Kan., then called for the original motion. Many applauded, despite earlier instructions by Jake Tilitzky against doing so. Ulli Klemm, Chicago, warned people about the urgency of those wanting to vote. He said it was "rooted in fear" and compared it to the urgency of the crowd that shouted of Christ, "Crucify him!"

A ballot vote was taken, and the result was clear to all. Several called for compassion. Erwin Cornelsen, Vancouver, said he was hurt to be charged with hating homosexuals. Chuck Neufeld, Markham, Ill., acknowledged the joy of working with Keenan and the pain when he felt with her the fury of others.

Sue Goerzen, Harrow, Ont., co-chair of the sexuality committee, was given the last word. She said she was saddened that "we focused so much on homosexuality" and ignored our relationships as spouses or as parents and children.

The vote on the resolution was 1,557 in favor to 345 against. Afterward, in spite of the many calls for understanding and further study, comments were heard such as, "I'm glad that's finally over with."

Music was present throughout.

Development Plan. Another major discussion revolved around the proposed development plan, which includes a capital fund drive over the next three years. Announcements with handouts and small ornaments to attach to name tags had led up to the Saturday discussion.

Ray Hamm, Altona, Man., was uncomfortable with the mix of language (kingdom and money) and loose administration (Who decides about money?). He asked, "Where are the poor, the naked, the sick of Matthew 25?" Willard Unruh, North Newton, Kan., said the plan doesn't address the disparity between the rich and poor. Don Longbottom asked where the farm crisis is being addressed by this plan.

Others spoke positively, even enthusiastically, about the plan. Ken Peterson, Aurora, Ore., said he was excited about it. Leonard Wiebe, Newton, Kan., felt that spiritual renewal had been part of the plan from the beginning. "Funds are needed for programs," he said.

Small group discussion revealed a strong majority of support for the plan. Several said that the money is there. Others pointed out that spiritual renewal and economics go together. Don Steelberg, Wichita, Kan., said that "separating the spiritual and the practical is dangerous."

Later the delegates voted on four "kingdom commitments": (1) our call to spiritual renewal, (2) our call to service and leadership, (3) our call to kingdom goals and (4) our call to giving. The first three passed quickly. The fourth, which authorized "the General Conference Mennonite Church and related conferences to raise the needed funds for new work through a special above-budget fund drive with a goal of $17.5 million," brought more discussion.

Hamm introduced a substitute motion that would put off a fund drive for two years. This was defeated by a hand vote.

Al Zook, Denver, said he works in a soup kitchen that serves 6,000 meals

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The Women's Christian Fellowship of Grace Mennonite Church in Prince Albert, Sask., hosted the Saskatchewan Women in Mission Conference May 3. The theme was "Serve the Lord with Gladness" (Psalm 100:2). Receipts for the year totaled $103,248. Helen Kornelsen, who was elected vice president, spoke about missions in India. She served as a missionary in India from 1948-1985.

SELFHELP Crafts is sponsoring a three-week trip to India and Bangladesh Feb. 1-22, 1987. The tour is open to interested store volunteers, shop managers, board members and others affiliated with SELFHELP Crafts. The tour will be limited to about 15 participants. The estimated cost of the trip is $2,400 per person from New York. Apply by Aug. 31 to SELFHELP Crafts Tour, 240 N. Reading Road, Ephrata, PA 17522.

The United Nations is threatened by a financial crisis so severe that it poses a serious threat to the continued existence of the organization, according to Interfaith Action for Economic Justice. This situation of near bankruptcy is related to several factors: the cumulative withholding by 18 governments of about $100 million from projects they do not endorse, a chronic cash flow problem because of late payments, fluctuation in international exchange rates and a sudden, massive withholding of funds by the United States.

A few breaks were used for exercise.

per month. "The $150,000 already spent [on the Development Plan] could have run the soup kitchen for 12½ years," he said.

In the end, the call to giving passed by a wide majority.

A development fund committee representing the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, each province and district will meet in August to begin planning implementation of these commitments.

A celebration with balloons was held in the sunshine around noon on Saturday. More than 1,500 colorful balloons with commitment cards attached lofted into the sky. This followed passage of the first three kingdom commitments and preceded passage of the fourth.

Other actions. Delegates also passed a resolution brought by the Commission on Home Ministries on "Many Peoples Becoming God's People," which outlined goals for implementing "programs that enable full participation by all peoples in God's family."

Following a stirring speech on Wednesday night by Hubert Brown of Los Angeles (one of the main speakers for the youth sessions), Robert Kreider, North Newton, Kan., and others drafted a resolution on apartheid in South Africa. The resolution "requests the general secretary to arrange for drafting letters in the name of the conference to be sent" to Canadian and U.S. leaders to use their influence on South Africa to dismantle apartheid. Some delegates said the resolution should mention "our complicity" in apartheid and wanted stronger language about sanctions. Others disagreed about the efficacy of sanctions.

One afternoon was spent discussing "Leadership and Authority." A questionnaire on pastoral authority was filled out by delegates early in the week. Later the results were tabulated by computer and announced. Results were "mixed" and "subject to interpretation." Helen Kruger, Kitchener, Ont., summed up the results thus: "We want the pastor to have the responsibility, but we don't want to give him the authority."

The program included morning worships that focused on passages from the book of Acts. Jacob Elias, dean of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., led Bible studies each day. One evening was given to stories by minorities and young adult representatives, another to inter-Mennonite cooperation and another to getting to know Canada. Several dramas, including the two-act play "Wings" by Victoria Dyck, and "Prayer Phrases," a youth musical written and conducted by Harris Loewen, were performed.

Besides Brown, who told the youth to leave any congregations that will not support their reaching out to the world's needy, speakers included Myron Augsburger of Washington, Ronald Sider of Philadelphia, June Alliman Yoder of AMBS, who addressed the youth, and Peter Ediger, Arvada, Colo., who filled in as a speaker at the youth sessions when Brown's plane arrived late. Curiously, each of these speakers, except Ediger, is a member of a Mennonite Church congregation.

At the end of Sider's Schowalter memorial address on Saturday evening, he called homosexual practice a sin. When he finished, Peter Ediger cried out from one end of the auditorium, "Ron Sider, I need to talk to you. . . . Some of us who have prayed and studied the Scriptures feel united in our calling to loving our brothers and sisters who are gay. You've misrepresented us. I hurt."

Sider responded, "I think I'm growing in love and acceptance, but I cannot abandon what I understand to be a clear biblical teaching." Loud applause followed.

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THE MENNONITE
ASSOCIATED MENNONITE
biblical SEMINARIES EDITION

AMBS Bulletin
August 12, 1986

1986 graduates

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries conferred postgraduate degrees and certificates on 54 students at the 27th commencement May 30 held at Canaan Baptist Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Thirty-one students were graduated from Goshen Biblical Seminary (GBS, Mennonite Church) and 23 from Mennonite Biblical Seminary (MBS, General Conference Mennonite Church). The graduates became part of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries Alumni Association, an integration approved in the past year of the alumni associations of the two schools.

Orlando Costas, dean of Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Mass., addressed the graduates on "Mission in a New Age." Using Isaiah as a model for prophetic missions, Costas challenged the graduates "to put your movement at the service of God's world."

Master of Divinity

The M.Div. degree is a three-year program designed to equip women and men for effective participation in the various ministries of the church in North America and around the world, including pastoral, teaching, counseling, evangelism, cross-cultural and academic ministries.

R. Eric Alderfer (GBS) . . . plans pending. At home in Goshen, Ind., Eric valued the opportunity "to live and work with people committed to exploring what it means in today's world to love God with heart, soul and strength, and to love others as ourselves." Eric is the son of Russell and Gladys (Henning) Alderfer, Harleysville, Pa., a member of Plains Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa., and an alumnus of Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa.

Eleanor Beachy (GBS) . . . serves Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan., as co-pastor with her husband, Perry. "I value the foundation I received for continuing study and understanding of the biblical message." Both Perry and their son Jonathan are recent AMBS graduates. Eleanor is an alumna of Goshen (Ind.) College.

Joan Carolyn Blatz (MBS) . . . will take further study in the fall at AMBS. Joan is the daughter of Frank Blatz, Lowe Farm, Man., and a member of Southside Fellowship, Elkhart. She is an alumna of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Janet M. Breneman (GBS) . . . will join the SCUPE (Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education) program in Chicago for the school year, following which she expects to return to Central America as a missionary with Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities. Highlights were the faculty's modeling of dedication, their servanthood stance and their openness to relationships with students, as well as the supportive relationships with other students and the wealth of new learning. Janet is the daughter of Clifford and Jean Breneman of Lancaster, Pa., and is a member of the Masonville Mennonite Church, Lancaster. She is an alumna of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.

Stephen W. Cave, not pictured, (GBS) . . . is working while doing extended units of CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education). Steve has a two-year-old son, Marc Stephen. His parents are Mr. and Mrs. Quentin R. Cave, Greenwood, Ind. Steve is a member of Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, and is an alumnus of Indiana State University, Terre Haute.

Terri Enns (MBS) . . . plans pending. Terri especially appreciated the wom-

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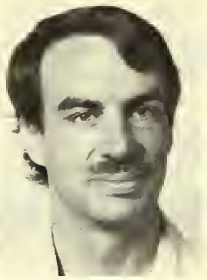
Alderfer
Enns

Beachy
S. K. Gehman

Blatz
S. G. Gehman

Breneman
Gingrich

1986 graduates
continued

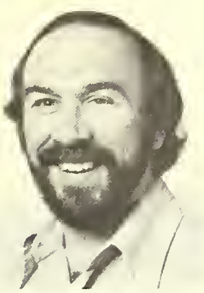


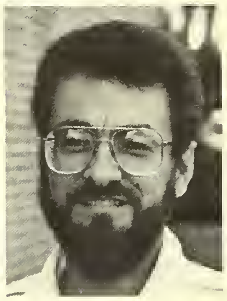
Goetz
R. Hurst

Holiday
Kerr

Horner
Klitzke

B. Hurst
Kuhns





en's support group, learning to know faculty and people in administration, lounge interactions and classes. She is married to Dan Brilhart, a 1986 graduate of GBS. Terri's parents are Robert and Ruth Enns of Fresno, Calif. She attended the College Community Church (Mennonite Brethren), Clovis, Calif., and is an alumna of Goshen (Ind.) College.

Arnold Dietz (GBS), not pictured, . . . B.D.-M.Div. exchange. Arnold continues employment at Lindahl Specialties and participates in ministry at St. Mark Missionary Church where he is a member. He particularly enjoyed the course "Marriage and the Family" taught by David Augsburger as well as acquaintances made within the seminary community. Arnold and his wife, Nancy, have six children, Cheryl, Amy, Cindy, Laura, Jerri, and Holly. He is an alumnus of Bethel College, Mishawaka, Ind.

Sharon K. Gehman (GBS) . . . plans pending. Sharon is married to Steven Gehman. Her parents are Marilyn and Stanley Keister of Mifflinburg, Pa. Sharon is a member of the Indian Creek Church of the Brethren, Harleysville, Pa. She is an alumna of Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Steven G. Gehman (GBS) . . . plans pending. Steve is married to Sharon Gehman. His parents are Anna and Luke Gehman, Pennsburg, Pa. Steve is a member of the Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., and an alumnus of Messiah College.

Elisabeth Joy Gingrich (GBS) . . . is looking for a position as hospital chaplain. Elisabeth cherishes the friendships formed at AMBS and the support experienced during difficult times taught her deeply about the meaning of grace. Her parents are Olive and Willard Gingrich, Freeport, Ill. Elisabeth is a member of Freeport Mennonite Church and an alumna of Hesston (Kan.) College and the University of New Mexico.

Ewald Goetz (MBS) . . . will return to Paraguay with his wife, Kaethe, and children, Anita and Christina, where he will teach in the "Instituto Biblico Indigena" in the Paraguayan Chaco. A highlight was the opportunity to expand his vision of mission through integrating his experiences with various courses. Ewald is the son of David and Tina Goetz, Filadelfia, Fernheim Colony, Chaco, and a member of the Filadelfia Mennoniten-Gemeinde in Filadelfia. He is an alumnus of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg.

Samuel Arthur Holiday (GBS) . . . will continue studies at Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind., in the Krannert Graduate School of Management. "AMBS provided an environment which fostered significant growth for me in self-understanding and in an understanding of my Christian faith." He and his wife, Roberta, are the parents of three children, Jemina, Sarah and Seth. They are members of the Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind. Sam is an alumnus of Greenville (Ill.) College.

Carl A. Horner (GBS) . . . is looking for a pastoral assignment. "The whole experience has been a tremendous one." He and his wife, Stephanie, are the parents of a son, Nathan, almost 2. They are members of Berkey Avenue Fellowship, Goshen, Ind. His parents are Glen A. and Elaine Horner of Wooster, Ohio. He is an alumnus of Goshen College.

Brenda Martin Hurst (GBS) . . . with her husband, Ray Hurst, is co-pastor at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., beginning in August. "I've appreciated the relationships developed with faculty, and of the learning and growth experienced as a result of knowing them as peers and companions in the search for truth and in a pilgrimage of faithfulness." Her parents are Hannah and Lester Martin of Ephrata, Pa., and her home congregation is the Hess Mennonite Church in Lititz, Pa. She is an alumna of Trinity College, Deerfield, Ill.

Ray Nelson Hurst (GBS) . . . with his wife, Brenda Martin Hurst, is co-pastor at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. "Seminary was a stretching and stimulating experience. The classroom learnings and modeling by the faculty have stimulated my own life to greater faith and commitment." Ray is the son of Mary and Noah Hurst of Lititz, Pa., and a member of the Hess Mennonite Church, Lititz. He is an alumnus of Trinity College, Deerfield, Ill.

Nancy Kerr (MBS) . . . plans to continue in her present assignment as teaching elder at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., until September, following which she hopes to assume another pastorate. "Community, curricula, chapel, faculty and friends, committee work, class instruction—I reached for it all and found all of it very good." Nancy has two children, Richard and Donna Williams. She is the daughter of Iris Kerr of Memphis, Mo., and is an alumna of Boston University.

Fred L. Klitzke (MBS) . . . with his wife, Donna Marie, and four children, Maria, Blain, Rebecca and Anna, will spend the coming year in Elkhart, where he hopes to work as a counselor to people troubled by alcohol problems and related issues. Fred valued biblical studies and practical theology as applied to pastoral counseling. He is the son of Virgil Klitzke of Newton, Kan., and Verla Edwards of Ness City, Kan., and is an alumnus of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. The Klitzkes are members of the Fellowship of Hope congregation, Elkhart.

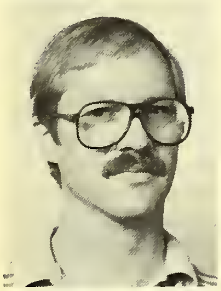
Marlin Duane Kym, not pictured, (MBS) . . . B.D.-M.Div. exchange. With his wife, Betta, he began serving in a pastoral team ministry at First Mennonite Church, Hutchinson, Kan., on June 1. He graduated from AMBS in 1967 with the B.D. degree. The Kyms have three children, two of whom are married, Raymond and Marvin and Philip, a student at Goshen College.

Marlin is an alumnus of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Curtis E. Kuhns (MBS) . . . serves part time as youth minister at the Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, where he is a member. He is interested in full-time pastoral ministry. Curt values his time at AMBS as "beneficial in acquiring tools and methods of studying Scripture, in giving a historical and theological framework against which to test findings, development in effective communication of those findings, and developing disciplines of nurture to help live those findings." Curt and his wife, Carol, have two children, Christy and Jeremy. His parents are Stan and Vi Kuhns of Wichita, Kan. He is an alumnus of Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan.

Nomura

Lichti

Lind


Maust

Takeji Nomura (MBS) . . . has begun a church planting assignment in Fukuoka City on the island of Kyushu in Japan. "My time at seminary provided reaffirmation for ministry through study and fellowship. We experienced the love and encouragement of the AMBS community." Takeji and his wife, Harumi, are members of the Fukuoka Mennonite Church. They have four children, ages 4 to 10, three girls, Kaori, Orie and Eri, and one son, Keita. Takeji's mother, Mrs. Yaeko Nomura, lives in Sanda City on the island of Honshu.

Frederich M. Lichti (GBS) . . . is pastor at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont. Fred and his wife, Rosemary, have two children, Nathan and Katherine. He is an alumnus of the University of Waterloo, Ont.

Ralph Lind (GBS) . . . in early August assumed responsibilities as pastor at Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church. Ralph and his wife, Brenda Janzen Lind, have two children, Kate and Amanda. Their home congregation is Reba Place Fellowship, Evanston, Ill. Ralph's mother is Ethel Lind of Hesston, Kan. He is an alumnus of the University of Illinois, Chicago.

James Maust (GBS) . . . with his wife, Mildred, will spend time with their family and friends in Pennsylvania before assuming an assignment later in the year. The couple has two grown children. Jim's parents are Herbert and Erma Maust of Elizabethtown, Pa. He is a member of Branch Fellowship, Telford, Pa.

Ross Miller (GBS) . . . is serving as associate pastor of Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio. "I appreciated the biblical knowledge I gained and the friendships that I was able to build." He and his wife, Judy, are the parents of 1-year-old Andrew Stephen. Ross' parents are Wilbur and Ann Miller, Wooster, Ohio. He is a graduate of Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio.

Wayne Nitzsche (GBS) . . . has been and will continue as assistant pastor at Sunnyside Mennonite Church. "I valued the Bible study in the Gospel of Mark with Willard Swartley as well as the Pentateuch with Millard Lind, and some friendships that will be carried with me for the rest of my life." He and his wife, Mary, are the parents of a 1-year-old daughter, Alison. Wayne's parents are Delmar and Alice Nitzsche of West Point, Neb. Wayne is a graduate of Hesston (Kan.) and Goshen (Ind.) Colleges.

Donald Patterson (MBS) . . . is pastor at Yoder (Kan.) Mennonite Church. The time at seminary carries a special memory for the family in the caring support they received at the death of their son, Michael. "Even though we come from different areas and backgrounds, 'community' became real in that time of need." Don is a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and a member of Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan. He and his wife, Sharlene, are the parents of two children, Dwayne (4) and Adrienne (2). His parents are Allen and Elaine Patterson of Whitewater, Kan.

Miller

Nitzsche

Don Penner (MBS) . . . is full-time assistant pastor at Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., as of Aug. 1. "I valued the many beautiful and precious lives that touched mine, deepening my awareness of the love of God." He is married to Kristen Reusser Penner. His parents are Marie and Corny Penner, Vineland Station, Ont. Don is a member of the Vineland United Mennonite Church and is a graduate of Conrad Grebel College, University of Waterloo, Ont.

Doris Rempel (MBS) . . . becomes pastor at Hope Mennonite Church in North Battleford, Sask. "The part of my seminary experience that has been and still is most exciting for me is the community spirit. The close relationships I have been able to develop here and the constant support I have received were very enriching." Doris is the mother of three children, Allan (16), Angela (14) and Stephen (11). She is a member of First Mennonite Church, Sardis, B.C., and is a graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College. She is the daughter of Meta Thiessen, Clearbrook, B.C.

Edwin F. Rempel (GBS) . . . B.D.-M.Div. exchange. Ed is doing an interim pastorate in Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference. He has served pastorates in Colorado and Indiana. "I appreciated the freedom to explore interests in the academic field without job responsibilities." Ed and his wife, Kathrine, are the parents of three grown children, one of whom, Vern, also graduated this year.

Vernon K. Rempel (GBS) is exploring a pastoral assignment. "I primarily enjoyed my studies and the class discussions. I also had a great time working with the ethics class at Goshen

continued on next page

Patterson

Penner

D. Rempel

E. Rempel

1986 graduates
continued

(Ind.) College and learning—in a beginning way—how to preach." At home in South Bend, Ind., Vern and his wife, Marilyn, are the parents of a son, Jess, 15 months. Vern is a member of the Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church and graduated from Hesston and Goshen Colleges. His parents are Edwin and Kathrine Rempel, South Bend.

V. Rempel
Ulrich

Roman
Weber-Lehman

Scheffler-Kroeker
Weber

Smith
C. Wiebe

Javier Roman (GBS) . . . is working for Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pa. "Attending AMBS was definitely a highlight in my life. I was never worked so hard before academically and I also tremendously appreciated the communal aspect of seminary life." Javier is a member of The Rock of Horeb Church, Utica, N.Y., and a graduate of State University of New York, Oswego. His parents are Luis and Gloria Roman, Utica.

Peter Scheffler-Kroeker (MBS) . . . completed studies at Waterloo (Ont.) Lutheran Seminary. Formerly from Steinbach, Man., Peter with his wife, Ruthild, will seek a pastoral assignment in south Germany. He is an alumnus of the University of Manitoba.

Roger Alan Smith (MBS) . . . is looking for a pastoral ministry assignment. "I've grown and learned much through the ministry of my housemates—emotionally, intellectually and spiritually." He is a member of First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., and a graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. His parents are LeRoy and Evelyn Smith of Walton, Kan.

John F. Ulrich (GBS) . . . is working at Elkhart General Hospital for the summer and is seeking a pastoral counseling assignment to begin in the fall. He will be married to Tina Hartzler this month. Seminary highlights included "household living, theological semester off-campus, C.P.E. (Clinical Pastoral Education) and the wealth of friendships." John is a member of Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio, and a graduate of Goshen College. His parents are Frank and Cara Ulrich of Archbold.

Bonita F. Weber-Lehman (GBS) . . . is living in Richmond, Va. Bonita is married to David Weber-Lehman. She is a member of Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church and is an alumna of Eastern Mennonite College. Her father is Lester Weber, Reinholds, Pa.

Doris Weber (GBS) . . . assignment in process. The seminary experience provided "a special time of nurture and stimulation. I was challenged and stretched, cared for; glad for friendship and informal fellowship with faculty, staff, and students." In 1985 Doris began her second four-year term as a member of the Board of Overseers of Goshen Biblical Seminary. She is a member of Avon Mennonite Church, Stratford, Ont., and a graduate of the University of Waterloo, Ont. Doris and her husband, Rod, are the parents of six grown children.

Carl L. Wiebe (GBS) . . . started in midsummer as associate pastor at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church. Carl is a member of Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, and is a graduate of Goshen College. He and his wife, Mary, have one child, Kelly Nicole, 5 months old. His parents are Peter and Rheta Mae Wiebe, Glendale, Ariz.

Herman J. Wiebe (MBS) . . . began Aug. 1 as pastor at North Star Mennonite Church, Drake, Sask. He is a member of the Eyebrow (Sask.) Mennonite Church, and a graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. He and his wife, Esther, are the parents of three children, Timothy (12), Curtis (10) and Marlin (4). His mother is Sarah Wiebe of Taber, Alta.

Master of Arts in Theological Studies

The new M.A. in Theological Studies degree is a two-year program of graduate study for students who wish to supplement other professional training or strengthen their participation in the life, mission and service of the church.

Otis Edward Hochstetler (GBS) . . . with his wife, Betty, returned in July to Brazil for a church planting assignment with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart. Otis is a member of Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., and a graduate of Goshen College. The couple have two children, Richard Lee and Debra Ann.

Janet M. Janzen (MBS) . . . with her husband, Rick, is co-director of Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan service programs. Seminary was "stimulating." The Janzens have two children, Chris and Stephanie. They are members of the Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Church.

Randy Roth (GBS) . . . is looking for work in the Michiana area. "I have been enriched by the study of Greek and Hebrew. I gained a new awareness and appreciation for the Old Testament, for women and men issues and of myself." Randy and his wife, Mary, are the parents of two children, Olivia (4½) and Anika (1½). His parents are

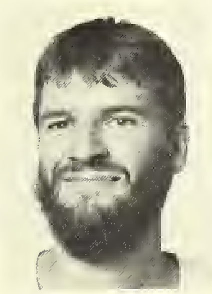
H. Wiebe
J. Janzen

Hochstetler
Roth

Oscar and Verelda Roth of Lombard, Ill. He is a member of Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, and a graduate of Goshen College.

Karen Martens Zimmerly (MBS) . . . during the summer is working with the Crownhill Mennonite Church in Sterling, Ohio. "Living and interacting with people from a wide variety of backgrounds has brought new questions and new understandings of what it means to live as Christians. Studying the Old Testament has opened up its meaning in vital and refreshing ways." She and her husband, Terry Zimmerly, will move to Chicago in the fall. Karen is a member of the Fiske (Sask.) Mennonite Church and a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan. Her parents are Albert and Irene Martens of Fiske.

Master of Arts in Peace Studies
The M.A. in Peace Studies is a two-year program to deepen understanding of and commitment to the biblical vision of peace and justice and its embodiment in the world.

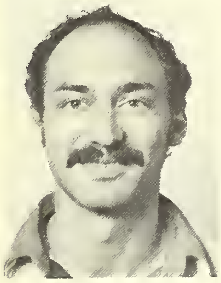
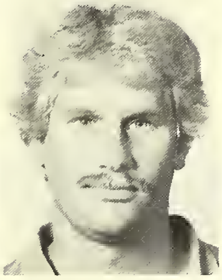


Zimmerly
Lamoreau

Brilhart
Yaguchi

Gridley
Amstutz

R. Janzen
Baumgartner

Daniel Lee Brilhart (GBS) . . . is director of the video and film library for Sisters & Brothers, Inc., Goshen, Ind. Highlights include the men's support group and exploring faith issues with faculty and friends. Dan is married to Terri Enns, a 1986 M.Div. graduate. He is the son of Earle and Marnetta Brilhart, Scottdale, Pa., and is a member of the Market Street Mennonite Church, Scottdale. He is an alumnus of Goshen College.

Robert Erwin Gridley (MBS) . . . is working with the Church of the Brethren Volunteer Service in southeastern Ohio, where he serves as peace organizer for the Appalachian Peace and Justice Network. Bob welcomed "the emphasis on AMBS as community and the acceptance of student input by all levels of community life." He found that faculty and student interaction enhanced the sense of community and the partnership of faith. Bob and his wife, Elaine, are members of the First Baptist Church of Topeka, Ind. He is an alumnus of Gordon Conwell Theological School, Wenham, Mass.

Richard O. Janzen (MBS) . . . with his wife, Janet, is co-director of Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan service programs. "Refreshing" is how Rick characterized seminary.

John Edwin Lamoreau (MBS) . . . plans pending. John and his wife, Nena, are the parents of a preschooler, Garron. He is a member of Mennonite Covenant Fellowship, Gresham, Ore. He is an alumnus of the University of Oregon.

Yobu Yaguchi (GBS) . . . will work for the Japan Mennonite Christian Church Conference. Yobu appreciated "friendship, life in Mennonite community and hard work." Yobu is the son of Yorifumi Yaguchi, Sapporo, Japan, and a member of Sapporo Shalom Mennonite Church. He is an alumnus of Hubusei College.

Certificate in Theological Studies
(one year)
The Certificate is a one-year program designed to equip people for stronger participation in the church.

C. Paul Amstutz (GBS) . . . and his wife, Hildi, have accepted a church planting assignment with Mennonite Board of Missions in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Paul appreciated "being challenged to live with a healthy tension between ecumenical kingdom growth and distinctive Anabaptist values and understandings," as well as "innovative chapel services." Paul and Hildi have two children, Miriam and Daniel. Paul is the son of Clifford W. and Lois Amstutz, Hesston, Kan., and a member of the Hesston College Mennonite Church and Hildi of the Menonitengemeinde, Friesland Colony, Paraguay. He is an alumnus of Hesston and Bethel Colleges, North Newton, Kan.

Jeffrey Lynn Baumgartner (MBS) . . . and his wife, Gail, have accepted a teaching assignment in Egypt with Mennonite Central Committee. Highlights were "the chance to study some subjects in greater depth and the opportunity of being challenged in other areas of faith and life." Jeff is the son of Marguerite and Ronald Baumgartner, Versailles, Mo. The Baumgartners are members of Bethel Mennonite Church, Fortuna, Mo. Jeff is an alumnus of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Jim Compton-Schmidt (MBS) . . . taking C.P.E. (Clinical Pastoral Education in counseling) at Kingsview Center, Reedley, Calif. Jim particularly appreciated the love and care shown by faculty, staff and students at AMBS. He is married to Annie Compton-Schmidt and they have three children, Mike McClellan, Kari and Kim Compton. He is the son of Elmer and Lucille Schmidt of Sylmar, Calif., and a member of First Mennonite Church in Reedley, Calif. He is an alumnus of Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kan., and of the University of Dubuque (Iowa) Theological Seminary.

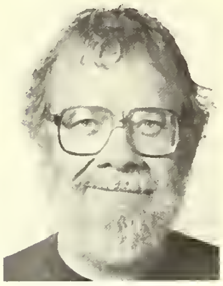
Mildred Freeman (GBS) . . . plans to participate in Ontario Mennonite Music Camp in August and will enter the University of Ottawa in the fall for studies in teaching in French. Among her seminary experiences, Mildred values the tools she gained for Bible study and the opportunity to reflect on her ministry in the church, both domestic and overseas. She is the daughter of Emerson and Leah Freeman, Elmira, Ont., and a member of the Hawkesville (Ont.) Mennonite Church. She is an alumna of the University of Western Ontario, London.

David L. Overmyer, not pictured, (MBS) . . . in June assumed a management position in banking. David served as minister of Wawaka (Ind.) United Methodist Church.

Louann Richcreek, not pictured, (MBS) . . . plans to pursue studies in commercial photography in the fall. "I learned a lot about Presbyterianism and also grew closer to God." She is a member of First Presbyterian Church,

continued on next page

1986 graduates
continued



Compton-Schmidt
Freeman

Goshen, and a graduate of Indiana University.

Ilse H. Yoder (GBS) . . . in April was commissioned as pastoral elder at East Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church. "I am grateful for the learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom, for the nurture given and the growth elicited by the community, and for the caring and sharing in relationship with others on campus." She and her husband, Larry, are the parents of two children, Erika Elizabeth and Laura Anne. Her mother is Esther E. Hodel of Carlsbad, New Mexico. She is a graduate of Goshen College and Indiana University.

Yoder

End-of-year photo essay

1. The AMBS community held a retirement party May 23 for Weyburn and Thelma Miller Groff and Paul Roten. (Thelma is third from left on bench; Weyburn is at right). Paul was unable to attend the picnic and recognition meeting in the chapel due to illness. *John Bender photo*

Weyburn worked in teaching and educational administration at Union Biblical Seminary, India (1951-64), Conrad Grebel College (1964-65), Goshen Biblical Seminary (1965-86) and AMBS as registrar (1970-86). He and Thelma were missionaries in India (1946-64) and served in two interim pastorates. Thelma served as AMBS spiritual formation resource person.

During the 1985-86 school year Paul still worked as librarian but on a part-time basis. He had been head librarian at AMBS since 1965, teaching earlier in speech and drama at Manchester College, Sioux Falls College and Dartmouth College. Since January Paul had had a number of surgeries for cancer. He died at home early Sunday morning, May 25.

2. Ross and Judy Miller head for the commissioning service May 29 in the Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount. *Howard Zehr photo*

New publication

There's something old and something new coming in an old-new publication: *AMBS Bulletin*. In recent years the *Bulletin* has been a quarterly insert in *The Mennonite* and *Gospel Herald*. Now it has been revamped to serve a more narrowly segmented audience, continuing on a quarterly schedule.

The new *AMBS Bulletin* is intended as a service piece to enrich the ministries of Mennonite leaders by keeping them informed of developments in theological education in general and of the thinking taking place at AMBS in particular.

The majority of the mailing labels for the *AMBS Bulletin* will be addressed PASTOR and sent to General Conference and Mennonite Church congregations, to conference and agency leaders, to AMBS alumni and by request to interested lay people. The new publication expands the audience of *AMBS Window*, which was disbanded in 1985.

The interests of the wider church will continue to get attention through news, feature articles, reports and publicity about AMBS channeled through existing church publications.

AMBS Bulletin Special Order Form
(AMBS alumni, GC and MC pastors and conference leaders will receive *AMBS Bulletin* automatically)

_____ I'm a lay person with a special interest in comment from AMBS faculty and administrators, sermon helps, and reviews related to the AMBS departments of Bible; History, Theology and Ethics; and Church and Ministry. Send me for a trial one-year subscription to *AMBS Bulletin*.

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

Congregation ____________________

Send to John Bender, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

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3. Myron Gerber, member of the Cassel Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont., and Clair Schumm, pastor of Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., are part of the visitors who attended the May 29 commissioning service, held the evening prior to commencement exercises. *Howard Zehr photo*

4. Orlando Costas (with jacket) gave the commencement address for AMBS graduates in an evening service May 30 at Caanan Baptist Church, Elkhart. At the reception following he is shown chatting with Margaret and Daniel Schipani, and (right) Angel Luis Miranda. Daniel is professor of Christian education and personality, and Angel Luis is a member of the GBS Board of Overseers. *John Bender photo*

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In memoriam

Paul Roten at library card catalog

Before the May 29 commissioning service for people who had completed studies at AMBS, the library staff, assisted by Gertrude Roten, planted a tree in memory of Paul Roten who died Sunday, May 25. Staff shown are (from left) assistant librarian Lois Longenecker and head librarian Eileen Saner. Howard Zehr photo

Recognition for Paul Roten 1920-1986

Henry Poettcker

Paul Roten and books were inseparable. If you looked in on Paul in his library office he was probably reading a book, and more than likely had several on his lap or scattered around him. I'm not sure whether it was Paul's love for books that led him into the debating field, or whether his debating appetite and ability led him to seek out the books which would be helpful to him. In either case, Paul was a reader.

Paul undertook library studies at the University of Michigan. Gertrude Wiebe's and his life intersected at Manchester College. Paul was the son of an American Baptist minister.

Paul had a sense of humor. Not given to many or unnecessary words, his eyes would suddenly light up during a discussion, and then he'd produce an amusing story, a humorous quote or a limerick that drove home its point with subtle sarcasm or ridiculous logic.

Paul was a man of conviction. He knew what he stood for and undergirded his life philosophy with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. Studying the theological sources came later when he had moved into the AMBS library, but those sources he came to know well. Any number of articles are now in my files, thanks to Paul's observant eye.

Paul wasn't sure what retirement might do by way of cramping his style. When the arrangements for the 1985-86 school year called for a slight retrenchment of his full-time involvement, he was only too ready to serve. But he found it difficult to stay within the less than full-time occupation in the library.

When medical checkups necessitated the operation of a growth, which proved to be malignant, the treatment which was called for was going to be taxing. Paul, with deep faith, accepted what was necessary. It was, however, difficult to accept a more serious nature of his condition as readily, when further tests showed that several parts of his body were affected. He died at home early Sunday morning, May 25.

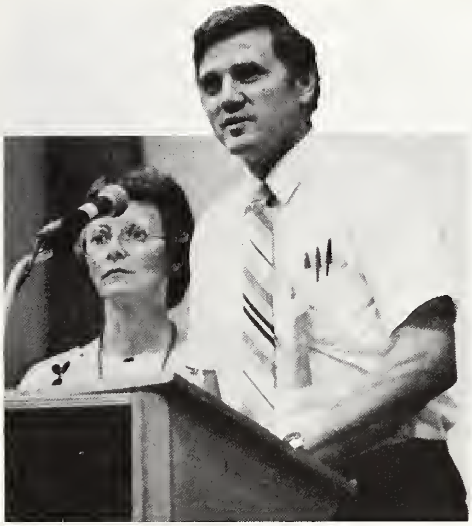
The AMBS community, the many who have walked the seminary halls with Paul the past 21 years, remember many of the contributions for which we are indebted to Paul Roten. As letters arrived for a book of appreciation, I took them to Paul for him to read and enjoy. Before Paul's death we commissioned his son, Paul Lyman, to do a piece of pottery to be placed in the library. It will be a reminder of the many steps which Paul took, the many cards which he prepared, the many books he read and the many memos he sent to faculty, staff and students.

Paul rested in and trusted his Maker whom he loved, served and on whom he waited. Our love and support are expressed to Gertrude, Reneé and Paul Lyman.

Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., will hold an all-day seminar Oct. 25 entitled "Gospel and Resistance: Non-Violent Christian Presence in Situations of Violent Conflicts." Sponsored by the Markham Peace Ministry, the seminar is designed to bring together local congregational leaders, potential participants in Christian Peacemaker Teams and their supporters from Chicago and the Midwest. For information contact Markham Peace Ministry, 16200 S. Kedzie Ave., Markham, IL 60426, (312) 333-1358.

First Mennonite Church, Ransom, Kan., celebrated its 100th anniversary June 8. Laurel Sargent welcomed about 190 people who had come from as far away as California, Manitoba and Illinois. Five former pastors—D. C. Wedel, Willard Schrag, Vernon Lohrentz, Herbert Dalke and Ruben Siemens—shared memories. When asked who had been members and attenders the longest, John Ummel and his sister Lillie Burgess remembered attending in the 1890s. Walter Neufeld is the pastor.

Welcome Inn, a voluntary service unit in Hamilton, Ont., celebrated its 20th anniversary May 23-25. Of the 81 volunteers who have served at Welcome Inn over the past 20 years, 22 were in attendance. Many more sent cards or letters or called.



Elsie and Delmer Epp served as coordinators of the host committees.

A peace revival was held on each of four nights following the evening session. Meeting in a tent outside the Field House, participants sang rousing songs and shared testimonies about peace and justice activities.

The various commissions and programs of the General Conference presented creative reports, including Women in Mission for the first time. WM and Mennonite Men held special meetings on Wednesday afternoon. Each evening preceding the main session a GC school made a presentation.

The conference also included workshops for youth and adults, tours, much visiting with friends and relatives, and closed with a communion service on Sunday morning. *Gordon Houser, with notes from Bernie Wiebe and Muriel Thiessen Stackley*

Look for further reports on Saskatoon '86 in the next two issues (Aug. 26 and Sept. 9) of *The Mennonite.*

Stackley appointed editor of *The Mennonite*

Newton, Kan.—Muriel T. Stackley, 49, of Newton has been named editor of *The Mennonite,* semimonthly journal of the General Conference Mennonite Church, effective Sept. 1. The appointment was made by the conference's General Board upon recommendation of its communications committee. She succeeds Bernie Wiebe of Winnipeg, who has edited *The Mennonite* for 10 years.

Stackley has been serving as editor of the conference's News Service for the past two years. She is a former editorial assistant and youth editor of *The Mennonite* and in the intervening years has written and edited in various church-related capacities. From 1973-79 she was an assistant editor of the children's Foundation Series church school curriculum; founding editor of *Window to Mission* (1973-74) and of *In Touch* (1985-86); editor of the Committee on Women's Concerns *Report* for Mennonite Central Committee 1979-82; a writer for *Story Friends, On the Line, With* magazine, *Builder, Rejoice, Youth Bible Study Guide, Adult Bible Study Guide* and the Foundation Series for Youth; and a free-lance poet and photographer.

Stackley has bachelor's and master's degrees in English from Bluffton (Ohio) College and the University of Kansas, respectively. She has also studied at Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.), Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.), Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary (Fresno, Calif.) and the University of Nebraska (Lincoln).

Stackley says, "I accept this assignment with joy and humility and reiterate the 100-year-old invitation to read our church paper and talk back to it as members of a family."

She is the mother of two adult sons and a teenage daughter.

Executive director opening

Willowgrove invites applications for the position of executive director.

Willowgrove is a charitable organization affiliated with the Mennonite churches in the Toronto area, operating children's day camping, outdoor education and recreation programs serving approximately 19,000 individuals each year.

The executive director must have commitment to the mission and goals of the organization. Preferred qualifications include ability to develop new services, management experience, experience in children's camping programs and teaching certificate or university degree in related field.

Full-time/part-time position negotiable, commencing Oct. 1.

Send resumes to:
Willowgrove
Attn: Personnel Committee
Route 2
Markham, ON L3P 3J3.

"Vision Alive!" is the theme of the 50th annual Indiana Mennonite Women's Missionary Rally, which will be held Oct. 9 at the College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., from 9:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Child care and lunch will be provided. Speakers are Blanche Sell and Pam Tolmay.

"Grow as You Go" was the theme of the 44th conference of Manitoba Women in Mission. At least 408 delegates and guests registered at Steinbach Mennonite Church May 3 to hear committee reports, the mass choir and Commission on Overseas Mission worker Anne Garber. During the past year the 1,600 members of Manitoba WM contributed $150,665 toward various programs and projects, plus making 2,058 quilts, rolling 792 pounds of bandages, making 17,931 pounds of homemade soap, sewing 742 layettes and supplying 1,958 school and health kits.

Farmer/banker mediation, farm families in crisis and assistance with counseling and training service will be among the topics discussed at a gathering for pastors, farmers, church leaders and other concerned people to be held at the Hillsboro (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church, 104 S. Washington, Aug. 24, from 3-9 p.m. David Ostendorf, director of Prairie Fire, Des Moines, Iowa, is the keynote speaker at the evening session. "The Farm Crisis Among Mennonites" is the topic for the afternoon session. The gathering is sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee's Farm Crisis Committee in Kansas.

ABC highlighted Canadian sessions in Waterloo

Waterloo, Ont.—The first three letters of the alphabet—A for apology, B for bicentennial and C for construction—identify the highlights of the 84th annual sessions of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada held July 4-8 here.

Apology. When three leaders from the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches appeared before the CMC sessions on July 5, the usual fraternal greetings took an unusual turn, MB moderator John H. Redekop, MB conference minister Henry Brucks, and an older MB minister, Isaac Thiessen, brought an official apology to the CMC for a practice of "earlier times" when MB members had been excommunicated for marrying GCs (now CMC in Canada). The CMC responded unanimously with an offer to forgive. This response was officially delivered to the MB conference sessions that same day.

The CMC theme was "We Would See Jesus," based on John 12. Many delegates later reflected that this demonstration of forgiveness had been a special revelation of Jesus for them. It was a highly emotional time and tears flowed openly during this historical milestone.

Bicentennial. Because 1986 marks 200 years since the first Mennonites blazed the Conestoga trail from Bucks County, Pa., to the Niagara Peninsula in Ontario, three Canadian Mennonite groups (CMC, MB and EMMC) and the Brethren in Christ held their annual sessions in Ontario on similar dates.

To host these conferences, a local bicentennial commission offered special performances of Benjamin Britten's masterpiece, "War Requiem," at Kitchener, Ont., July 5-6. CMC sessions incorporated the Saturday concert in lieu of any other functions.

The Canadian Women in Mission had a mass women's choir sing at the Sunday evening missions service.

Bicentennial Sunday, July 6, brought together all the conferences plus local people (about 8,000 people in the morning, 3,500 in the afternoon) at the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium.

Ron Sider, Brethren in Christ author and professor, said to the morning assembly that three things are needed for Anabaptist groups to become "people of peace with a difference": (1) People must have a clear, personal faith. (2) Our peacemaking must be evident in our homes and families. (3) Our churches must model Jesus' new messianic community. Also included was an original festive anthem, "Parables of the Kingdom," composed and directed by Conrad Grebel College music professor Leonard Enns.

The afternoon began with an original instrumental music piece, "Song of a Dove," composed by Conrad Grebel College music professor Carol Weaver, in memory of the late Frank H. Epp. Epp had been the driving force in setting up the bicentennial plans. Walter Klaassen, author and professor of Anabaptist history, warned Anabaptist churches about being caught up with technology and technique. Instead, said Klassen, "We must learn to nurture our spiritual walking." The time is here for us to go into the "desert of silence" and then go out to the world.

Construction. The CMC delegates passed a dozen resolutions, but the most far-reaching one was to endorse construction of added facilities at 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard in Winnipeg. A 90.3 percent vote approved a $2.5 million expansion of Canadian Mennonite Bible College and CMC facilities.

The issue was the subject for much corridor conversation and concern. Some CMC administrators expressed surprise at the strong vote. It was probably helped by several statements from delegates who expressed a willingness to give larger amounts toward the project, so those who might be in an economic squeeze should not feel guilty if they could not contribute.

The rest of the alphabet. Resolutions passed included support for specific initiatives on behalf of Nelson Mandela's release from a South Africa prison; a new Native Ministries project to begin in Saskatoon, and introduction of a B.Min. program at CMBC.

The theme, "We Would See Jesus," was developed through special Bible studies on three of Jesus' parables and several sermons on how we see

Contemporary Christians place less emphasis on hell than Christians in past generations, according to church historian Martin Marty. "I have no doubt that the passing of hell from modern consciousness . . . is one of the major if still largely undocumented modern trends," Marty notes in an article for the *Lutheran.* Marty says the decline in emphasis on hell may be a good thing for the church. "If faith has survived the decline in hell, then it may be the result of an accent on the love of God for God's own sake" rather than a "fire escape" religion motivated by a fear of hell.

Walter Franz, Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Church pastor, here sitting among the delegates, was elected CMC chairperson.

Jesus in us, in the stories of our people and in the stories of our neighbors.

With the acceptance of the Petitcodiac (New Brunswick) Mennonite Church as one of four new members, the CMC now has member congregations in seven provinces.

Walter Franz, Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Church pastor, was elected as the new CMC chairman. *Bernie Wiebe*

Position opening

Position in developmental disabilities is open in Mennonite Mental Health Services beginning in December. Qualifications include training/experience in developmental disabilities, with skill in consultation and administration. Writing, editing and speaking are included also. Travel required. Salaried position or possible senior VS appointment.

Contact:
Gerald Shank, Personnel Services
MCC
Box M
Akron, PA 17501
(717) 859-1151.

With magazine (for Mennonite teenagers) features and explains in the May issue the causes and effects of the poor farm economy on both rural and non-rural people. A roundtable discussion with five Iowa farm youth reveals the effects of the current depression on their lives. In June *With* brings the results of a creative arts contest. Held every two or three years, the contest includes fiction, non-fiction, poetry, photographs, photo essays, artwork and cartoons.

"Empowered—for Action" is the theme for the 1986 Women in Ministry Conference, to be held Oct. 24-25 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. June Alliman Yoder will give three addresses, and there will be workshops. The registration fee of $20 includes the noon and evening meals on Saturday. For information write LaJane Yoder, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

Changing World, Unchanging Gospel

Get ready for the future at OMSC

Photo: Discovering the "Peters Projection" Global Map at OMSC, January 1986, are Samuel Bhajjan, Director of the Henry Martyn Institute, India, Koichi Kimura and Okcho Kimura, missionary appointees from Japan to Indonesia.

The Overseas Ministries Study Center draws international leaders from many areas of our changing world—most recently from India, Japan, Burma, Philippines, the Middle East, Tanzania, New Zealand, and Norway. In 1986, missionaries on furlough at OMSC, and these overseas church leaders, form a unique reservoir of cross-cultural expertise. Is this *your year* to gain new insights, deepen your mission commitment, and renew your spirit at OMSC? If you are not able to spend your furlough or study leave with us, perhaps you can come for a shorter period and profit from some of our seminars.

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 3,1986
The Bible in Mission and Mission in the Bible. Dr. Eugene Nida, United Bible Societies.

OCTOBER 6-10
The Missionary as Innovator: A Case Study Approach to Problems in Mission. Dr. Alan Neely, Southeastern Baptist Seminary. Co-sponsored by Maryknoll Mission Institute *at Maryknoll, New York.*

OCTOBER 14-17
Effective Communication with the Folks Back Home: A Writing Workshop for Missionaries. Robert T. Coote, OMSC staff, former managing editor, *Eternity.*

OCTOBER 20-24
Dynamics of Church Expansion: History's Lessons for Today's Missionaries. Dr. Andrew Walls, University of Aberdeen, Scotland.

OCTOBER 27-30
Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission: What's Ahead? Prof. Samuel Escobar, Rev. Thomas Stransky, C.S.P., Dr. Kenneth Kantzer, and Sr. Joan Chatfield, M.M. Co-sponsored by Princeton Seminary Center of Continuing Education, *at Princeton Seminary.*

NOVEMBER 10-14
World Evangelism: Biblical Mandate and Present Priorities. Dr. Samuel Moffett, Princeton Theological Seminary.

NOVEMBER 17-21
Equipping Leaders in Emerging Churches: Beyond the Limits of Schooling. Dr. Ted Ward, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

JANUARY 5-9, and 12-16, 1987
That the World May Believe. These two weeks constitute the first half of a month-long, comprehensive survey of the world Christian mission, co-sponsored by 30 seminaries and the Theological Students Fellowship. The focus of the first week is "Critical Issues in Mission"; the second week's theme is "Emerging Contexts for Mission." Two or three sessions are held each day, led by lecturers from the seminaries and mission agencies. Seminaries may offer academic credit for the January seminars.

JANUARY 19-23
African Christianity: Assessing the Problems and Prospects. Dr. Lamin Sanneh, Harvard University.

JANUARY 26-30
Mission in the Americas: an Inter-American Perspective. Prof. Jorge Lara-Braud, San Francisco Theological Seminary.

OVERSEAS MINISTRIES
STUDY CENTER
Ventnor, NJ 08406 U.S.A.

Publishers of *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*
Gerald H. Anderson, *Director*
James M. Phillips, *Associate Director*

☐ Please send application for residence
☐ Please send more information about the following seminars:

____
Name ____________________
Address __________________
City/State/Zip ______________

Three missionaries previously convicted and sentenced to 3½ years in prison in Greece on the charges of proselytism and child abduction, have been declared innocent in an Athens court of appeals after a four-day trial by a panel of three judges. The charges stemmed from the gift of a Bible to a 16-year-old member of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Saphir Athyal, president of Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India, visited Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., April 28-30. He addressed classes in biblical studies and conducted a chapel service. Athyal noted that Indian Christianity, in its mystical aspect, tries to "experience God as you fall in love; enjoy *feeling* it." He said that most Western Christians have a passive spirituality, never allowing themselves to fully live the experience of "feeling the hand of the Lord heavy on me," as the prophet Ezekiel wrote.

Children and teenagers faced a serious test of their Christian faith recently in the West African village of Kotoura. Asked to choose between following Jesus or remaining part of their family, they declared their love for both. However, they refused to abandon their faith in Christ. This resulted in several of the teenage youth being forced from their home and family. Gail Wiebe, a missionary in Burkina Faso with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, writes, "An uncle came back to the village from the Ivory Coast. He talked the family elders into doing whatever necessary to force the children to leave Christianity."

MINISTERS

Richard Burnham is beginning as assistant pastor at Grace Church, Dallas, Ore.

Steven R. Estes, pastor at Boynton Church, Hopedale, Ill., was ordained May 19 there.

Ronald Krehbiel has resigned as pastor at West Zion Church, Moundridge, Kan., and will be pastor at Salem Church, Freeman, S.D.

Janet McFall-Brown was licensed Jan. 26 to the ministry at First Church, Nappanee, Ind., where she is serving.

Leo Miller has resigned as pastor at Meadows (Ill.) Church, and will begin pastoral duties Oct. 1 at West Swamp Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Ernest Neufeld in September will be Northern District conference minister half time and half-time pastor/church planter at Fargo, N.D.

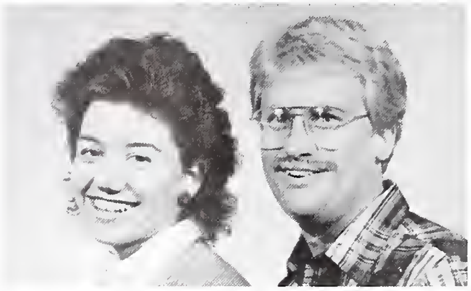
David Ortis began Aug. 1 as pastor at Emmanuel Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

Barry Schmell has been called to serve as pastor at Pleasant Oaks Church, Middlebury, Ind.

John S. Unrau in September will begin as pastor at United Mennonite Church in Yarrow, B.C.

Jeff Wright, a graduate of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., began in July as pastor at First Church, Upland, Calif.

WORKERS



Baumgartners

Ewerts

Maria Janeth Albarracin, Bogotá (Colombia) Mennonite Church, has begun a three-year Mennonite Central Committee term in Burkina Faso, where she is working with nutrition and dietetics. Her parents are Carlos and Gladys Albarracin of Bogotá.

Jeffrey and *Gail (Lehman) Baumgartner*, First Church, Berne, Ind., and Bethel Church, Fortuna, Mo., respectively, have begun three-year MCC terms in Tanta, Egypt, where they are working as elementary school teachers. Jeff received a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and a certificate of theology from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind. Gail received a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Goshen (Ind.) College. His parents are Marguerite and Ronald Baumgartner of Versailles, Mo. Hers are Rodney and Sandra Lehman of Berne.

Tim D. Eisenbeis, Salem-Zion Church, Freeman, S.D., has begun a three-year MCC term in Brazil, working as an agricultural extensionist. He received a bachelor's degree in international development from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. His parents are Anette and Larry Eisenbeis of Marion, S.D.

Claire and *Wallace Ewert*, North Star Church, Drake Sask., have begun three-year MCC terms in the Philippines. He is working as an agricultural enabler and she as a social service worker. Claire received a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Wallace received a bachelor's degree in physical education from the University of Saskatchewan. Their children are Lara and Matthew. His parents are Margaret and Milton Ewert of Drake. Hers are the late Aron and Katherine Friesen of Rosthern, Sask.

Perry and *Nancy Sprunger Ferris* and their daughters, Erica and Jessica, returned to North America in June after serving in Japan as missionaries for three years with the Commission on Overseas Mission. They will make their home in the Denver area, where Perry plans to do graduate work in counseling.

Robert Ramer of Edmonton, Alta., will become publisher of Mennonite Publishing House when Ben Cutrell retires as chief executive officer on Sept. 1.

Arthur and *Helen Wiens Rempel* and their daughter Theresa arrived in Winnipeg in June after serving in Taipei, Taiwan, under COM since 1983. Arthur served as the mission business manager/treasurer. Helen was

Witness for Peace is a faith-based organization that seeks individuals committed to working for peace through non-violence in Nicaragua. It offers eight-month terms, which require Spanish fluency/language study. It also sponsors two-week trips. WFP is interested in forming a Mennonite delegation to go to Nicaragua Nov. 17-Dec. 2. An application must be sent by Sept. 1 with $15 to Anita Bender, WFP Mennonite Delegation, 609 E. Allens Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19119, (215) 248-3227.

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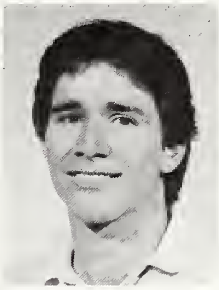

Eisenbeis

Ramer

guesthouse hostess and taught English conversation/Bible classes.

Henry and *Naomi Unrau* and their three children, Bethany, Rebekah and Julia, returned to Canada in June, having worked since 1978 in Botswana under COM. They are making their home in Clearbrook, B.C. Henry was the religious program coordinator for Radio Botswana, a state-owned radio station. Naomi was responsible for the Mennonite Guesthouse and preparing meals for gatherings and retreats.

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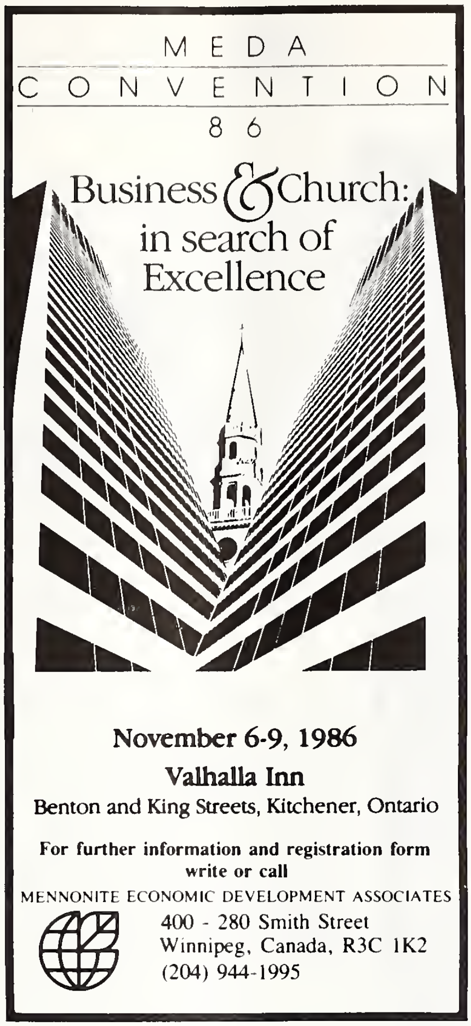

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Mennonite Housing Aid, Inc., is accepting applications for the administrator of Tamarack, a 135-unit senior citizen congregate living facility in northwest suburban Chicago at Palatine. The facility is under construction with opening planned for early fall.

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Richard Martin
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528 E. Madison St.
Lombard, IL 60148
(312) 622-8996.

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Is God calling you to voluntary service?

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- Rehabilitation aid
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- Public relations person
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- Warehouse worker/dispatcher
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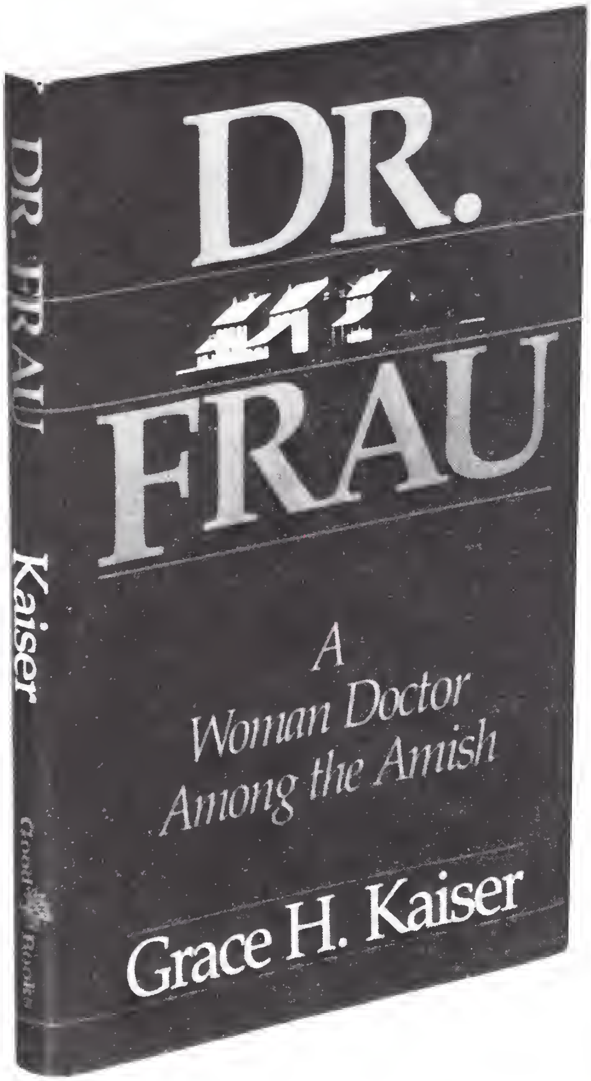
In the Phoenix area, the churches and institutions are providing a variety of housing and living arrangements for V.S. personnel. Some settings are the typical V.S. household setting, and others are set up for individuals or families. If you are interested in any of the above assignments, or any other aspect of the Phoenix Volunteer Program, contact:

Dale Wentorf
8611 N. 67th Ave.
Glendale, AZ 85302
(602) 939-9475.



A “Baby Doctor” Remembers—

Dr. Frau
by Grace H. Kaiser
6 × 9; 168 pages
Hardback, $14.95;($21.50 in Canada)

Few people have seen the side of life among Lancaster County Pennsylvania’s “plain people” that Grace Kaiser, a family doctor in this area, knew for 28 years.

Dr. Kaiser spent much of her professional time during those years as a “baby doctor.” She often went to her patients—mostly in her (usually) trusty station wagon, but sometimes by tractor, sleigh, or market wagon. As a result, she was familiar with the literal pulse of life in “plain” homes in all seasons and situations, at all hours of the day and night.

Her reminiscences of this very private world are full of rich detail. Her picture of those among whom she lived and worked reveals a people different from the idealistic portrait which less trusted outsiders often carry away. Among folk who clearly value children and family, hard work and good food, closeness to God and nature, she also found the tightwads and tricksters, the worriers and gossips, present in any society. Often seen as stern and strict, the Mennonites and Amish populating **Dr. Frau** also possess a hearty, often earthy, sense of humor.

Dr. Frau is not all laughter. There is poignancy and sorrow, from a pet dog who crosses the road at the wrong time to the Amish baby born imperfect among myriads of healthy ones.

Dr. Frau details, with both honesty and humor, a part of rural American life that few others have ever seen.

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LETTERS

About hymn texts

Thank you, James Bixel, for your letter (June 24 issue) expressing what so many of us feel regarding the current trend toward altering hymn texts.

I am not unsympathetic with the sentiments of many who are currently offended by sexist language or references. Yet as Bixel points out, we cannot rewrite history regardless of how distasteful or unfair we feel the facts may be; neither are we likely to come to a consensus on how much of the language in our hymns of faith is acceptable or offensive.

When we were children, many of us played a game called "telephone." Each child whispered to the next what he or she had heard from the previous person. The original message was usually altered and embellished till by the time it had passed through each subtle change, the "message" was barely recognizable in the end. Is there not a possible parallel in what I suspect could happen if each generation censors, deletes or rewrites hymn texts to suit a current trend?

Though I am not musically creative, I would encourage and challenge today's musicians to express their faith in whatever current language seems appropriate to them. Let the test of time determine their value.

The musical heritage with which we are entrusted is a rich one. The hymns we sing have for generations served God's children as comfort, solace, encouragement and inspiration. I would therefore plead with the New Hymnal committee to consider those of us who treasure it as it was handed down to us. For the sake of both the tradition and heritage which they embody, please let them stand as a mirror to the past, as well as an ongoing legacy for the future. *Lois Krause, 56076 Rio Lindo Drive, Elkhart, IN 46514*

July 4

Disappointed at letters

I read with disappointment the page of letters (July 8 issue) responding to the picture of a sculpture of Jesus as a woman (in the May 27 issue). I too was somewhat startled by the image of a female body on the cross, because I believe Jesus was historically a male human being. More disturbing, however, was the violent reaction expressed in the letters.

Apparently many people consider Jesus' male gender as central to his divinity. I do not consider gender as any more sacred than other human qualities Jesus possessed. Why are people suddenly alarmed at imagining Jesus as a female when he has been portrayed countless times (even in missionary literature) as a white person with blond hair and blue eyes? Or when God has been shown as an old white man with a beard? Neither of these are based on historical fact; rather they illustrate how we as human beings (black or white, male or female, fathers or mothers) envision God and Jesus in our own likeness. In many of the letters I sensed a lingering disgust of the female body, as if it were automatically "sexy" if shown without covering. To me, the nude body symbolizes vulnerability, brokenness and absence of self-defense—all of which Jesus experienced on the cross. It does not represent a Playboy mentality of exploitation.

I doubt that artist Edwina Sandys was trying to change historical fact. Perhaps she has helped enlarge our vision of God as incarnate in human beings. *Heidi Regier Kreider, 205 E. 11th, Newton, KS 67114*

July 14

RESOURCES

Sanctuary, a resource guide for understanding and participating in the Central American refugees' struggle, is available from T.E.C. Sanctuary Book, Campus Christian Center, 715 N. Park Ave., Tucson, AZ 85719, (602) 623-7575, for $8.75 (including postage).

Darlene Bogle tells of her life as a homosexual and how she became a heterosexual in the book **Long Road to Love** (Chosen Books, 1985). It costs $6.95.

More Stepping-Stones to Jewish-Christian Relations (Paulist Press, 1985) is an unabridged collection of documents issued by various Christian churches since 1975. It supplements a similar collection covering an earlier period. It costs $7.95.

"Study and action" have been prescribed by a new domestic hunger study guide to help Christians understand and cure the root causes of hunger in the United States. **Hunger in a Land of Plenty** is available for $4.50 plus $2 postage from Bread for the World, 802 Rhode Island Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20018, (202) 269-0200.

In **Beloved Adversary** (Zondervan, 1985), W. Glyn Evans contends that struggles between God and people are inevitable because of the great contrast between God's perfect and infinite nature, and our imperfect and finite one. It costs $5.95.

Prayer and the Pursuit of Happiness (Eerdmans, 1985) by Richard Harries explores how the pursuit of happiness fits in with Christian life. It costs $6.95.

God Comforts His People, book 7 of Eve B. MacMaster's projected 10-volume Herald Press Story Bible Series, is available for $5.95 ($8.05 in Canada).

Mike King, a Pennsylvania farm boy with athletic promise, became a paraplegic as the result of a motorcycle accident when he was 20. **The Mike King Story** (Good Books, 1985) is King's story about making peace with that fact. It costs $15.95.

Your Aging Parent (Chosen Books, 1985) by Maxine Dowd Jensen is an upbeat book showing adult children how to approach the progressive dependence of an aging parent. It costs $6.95.

Responding to requests from congregations, five (of six) Faith and Life Bible Studies are available. These workbooks, based on the New International Version, emphasize discipleship and the centrality of Jesus Christ. They are **Faith Refined by Fire** (1 Peter) by David Schroeder, **Have the Mind of Christ** (1 Corinthians 1-7) by Marilyn Peters Kliewer, **Better than Rivers of Oil** (Micah) by Gerald Gerbrandt, **New Heaven on a New Earth** (Revelation) by Philip Bender and **Living as God's Chosen People** (Colossians) by Helmut Harder. Each book is available from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, for $4.95.

Reaching outsiders

Ken Peterson

Church growth is like our national parks. They attract millions yearly from around the world.

The great lover of God's creation, John Muir, wrote of Yosemite Valley that it was "by far the grandest of all the special temples of nature I was ever permitted to enter . . . the sanctum sanctorum of the Sierra . . . the valley is more than halfway to real heaven . . . rocky strength and permanence combine with beauty of plants frail and fine . . . water descending in thunder and the same water gliding through meadows and groves in gentlest beauty."

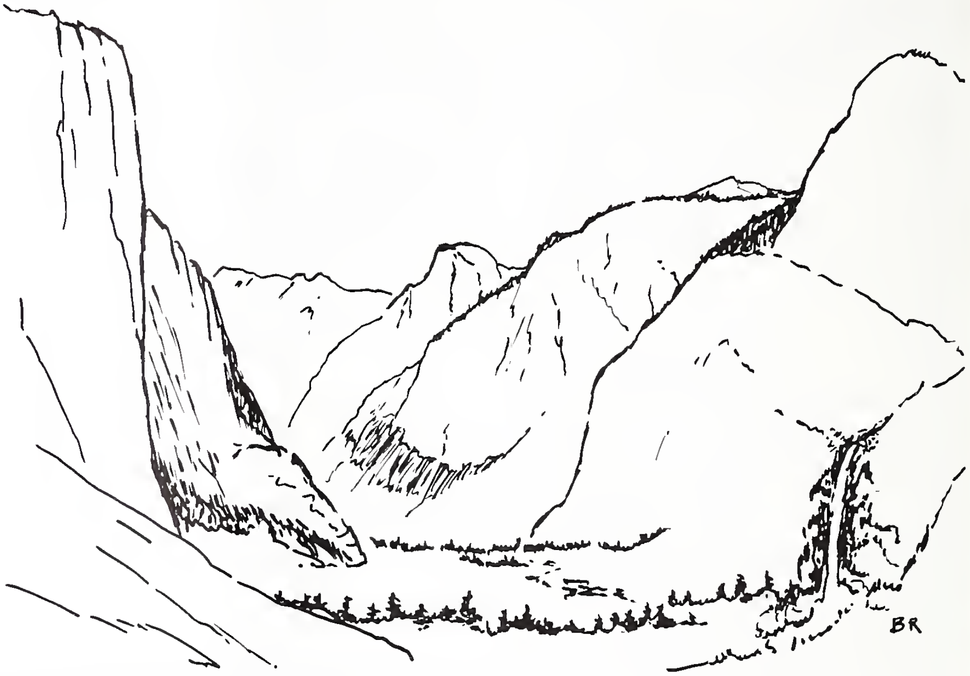
Yosemite National Park and other parks have a multitude of things to offer the peoples of the world. It is no wonder they attract thousands upon thousands of visitors. Yosemite Valley alone brings 30,000 visitors daily to its entrances.

Yosemite Valley is "the incomparable valley." It is a breathtaking wonder of giant granite shrines. It is a beauty-filled work of master art. It is a silent place that quiets the soul and lifts it to commune with God, the Creator.

El Capitan means "The Chief." It is the tallest unbroken cliff in the world, made of granite rock 3,000 feet high. Dominating the upper end of the valley is Half Dome. Domes are rare in the world, and to have one with a part so cleanly missing is stranger still. Other highlights of granite shrines include Cathedral Spires, Three Brothers, Sentinel Rock, Royal Arches, Washington Column and North Dome. From around the world people come to stand in awe of these landmarks, and many climb to some of their tops for a breathtaking, adventuresome view.

Everywhere the eye beholds beauty in Yosemite. Yosemite Falls rushes downward in three stages—2,425 feet. Other falls capture visitors—Bridal Veil, Vernal and Nevada. A rainbow is often seen in the spray at Vernal Falls. Mirror Lake reflects the adjacent mountains. Green trees and grasses fill the valley and surroundings. Flowers adorn the countryside. Beauty is attractive.

The valley is a quiet place. The deer seem to have little fear. A hush seems to prevail even with so many people there.



God's beautiful nature creation continues to have great magnetic appeal to people. When God's people show his beauty, the magnetism is even greater.

Everywhere there is something to offer. Helpful rangers answer questions and lead interesting tours. Free shuttle buses take you easily where you wish to go. Stores provide for basic needs. Evening programs richly entertain and inform.

As the national parks attract people because of the many things they offer, we in the church can learn an important lesson. What do we have to offer outsiders? Why should they enter our doors, stay and return Sunday after Sunday, year after year? What do we have that is attractive, interesting and helpful?

Luke, the physician, writes of Jesus, "And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all" (Luke 6:19). Jesus had much to offer for people's needs, and so multitudes followed him. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:22, "I am made all things to all people, that I might by all means save some." As Christ's body we are to be the compassionate hands reaching outward to touch others at their point of need. We are to provide services that help people in a wide variety of ways. We are to exhibit the personal caring found in the living Christ.

Throughout the Pacific District Conference we see a variety of ways of reaching out to touch people and win them to Christ and his church. In Aberdeen, Idaho, a living Nativity scene became a point of contact with the community. Aurora, Ore., had an aerobics class. Reedley, Calif., VS workers help elderly people with repairs, meals and household jobs. Paso Robles, Calif., has a community program called "Loaves and Fishes" to help with shelter and food. Fresno, Calif., is helping refugees learn English. Upland, Calif., has a hiking club and parties for children. These are only illustrative of the multitude of ways we can offer special services to people.

People want to be a part of a church that is interesting, fun, caring and personal. New people are coming to our churches and taking an interest in us because we are taking an interest in them.

What does your church have to offer outsiders? What could your church provide for the unchurched people in your community?

Ken Peterson is the pastor at Calvary Mennonite Church, 6711 S. Lone Elder Road, Aurora, OR 97009.

A story of three lamps

Jonathan P. Larson

The dust still hung in the shafts of sunlight and (Was it just my imagination?) there was the faintest whiff of smoke left in the room. Scattered all about in confusion were the tatters of a one-room existence, shredded furniture, shards of glass and bits of plaster scattered by the slam of automatic rifle fire. Only hours before this was the scene of a South African Defence Force raid on May 19 against supposed terrorist targets. The place was Mogoditshane, a village on the outskirts of Botswana's capital, Gaborone.

The pool of blood on the floor was mute but wrenching testimony to the price paid by Jabulani Masalela, a local citizen affectionately claimed as a native of the village, though his real home was in the far northeast of the country. The reasons for this affection are not hard to uncover. In addition to his professional responsibilities he had taken on the task of running the village night school, where older students came to complete their studies during evening hours. A local pastor described Jabulani's participation in the congregation of the Spiritual Healing Church, where he held the office of evangelist. He was often called on to lead worship, and in the absence of the pastor he gave able guidance to the believers of that group. And clearly he had a love of life in its youthful goodness. He was known for his zealous play as a defender on a local soccer team.

A final touch of irony is that his fiancée had been the victim of a car-bomb attack only late last year. She had been an innocent bystander at a nearby hospital when a still unexplained explosion left her with fatal injuries.

Jabulani Masalela's death is only a small clue to the agony of this whole region fraught with random violence, dreamless, troubled sleep and so many unanswered questions.

As I walk through the village and listen to the conversation of its frightened dwellers, I hear words of anger at those who shattered the quiet calm of a fall morning, anger at refugees whose presence in this country has drawn on local people the suspicion and fire of the South African military. Some speak of appealing to friendly nations to provide the country with sufficient weapons to defend its integrity. Others heap scorn on Botswana's tiny defense force for failing to respond to the invaders. Village elders sit with the chief in the shade of a little thorn tree still shaken and bewildered by the events that have overtaken them and for which they are so ill-prepared.

My thoughts go back again to the room where Jubulani used to live. Standing in a corner are three gas lamps that he used to take with him to lighten the classrooms of the night school. Somehow they have escaped any damage; their glass globes and fragile mantles are still perfectly intact. An insistent question echoes in the aftermath of the gunfire: "Who will light the lamps now?"

Jonathan P. Larson, Box 703, Gaborone, Botswana, is a General Conference missionary serving with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Note: On May 19 Gabarone was one of three sites hit by the South African Defence Force, which South African President Peter Botha called a "preemptive" strike against African National Congress "terrorists." He likened the raid to the U.S. bombing strike against Libya. The capital cities of both Zambia and Zimbabwe were also hit in the raids.

An African girl wears a mud pack as she prepares for a coming-of-age ceremony. As the woes and throes of turmoil continue in Africa, they seem more than a "coming-of-age" process. Who will light the "lamps"?

If I should die before I wake (What happens to my estate?)

Merlin L. Stauffer

An early childhood experience most of us can identify with is learning a bedtime prayer, similar to the following:

"Now I lay me down to sleep.
I pray thee Lord, my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray thee Lord, my soul to take."

With the emphasis of I, me and my in this simple prayer, it could be considered a selfish prayer. However, I prefer to see it as a prayer that acknowledges our total dependence upon God—for now and for eternity.

As small children we felt safe and secure knowing we were near someone who loved us. The possibility of dying in our sleep was an unreal concept that did little to disturb our rest.

As we grow older the possibility of not getting up the next morning becomes a reality. We begin to realize that unless we do it now, we may leave behind "unfinished business."

God gives us the opportunity and the responsibility of doing some planning for the inevitable fact "that it is appointed unto us once to die" (Hebrews 9:27). In the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12), after God tells him, "tonight you will die," he asks a question: "Those things you have provided for yourself, who gets them now?"

Using the available information, we conclude that the man was dying "intestate" (without a will). He had taken no thought, not made any provision for the future. He was content to spend his money on a day-to-day basis because he had "earned it."

While it is true that Jesus said, "Take no anxious thought for the morrow" (Matthew 6:25-34), the Scripture teaches us to make provision for those God has entrusted to our care and keeping. To fail to keep this trust when it is within our power to provide constitutes denying the faith (1 Timothy 5:8).

God has given us the gift of intelligence and we speak of "dumb" animals. When you compare people behavior and animal behavior, it is not always obvious where the gift of intelligence is being used.

What happens to your estate when you die is dependent on what provisions you make when you are alive.

If you die intestate, the government has predetermined how your estate will be divided. It is not interested in how charitable you planned on being when you die.

The state (province) has predetermined what portion of an estate goes to the surviving spouse and also what portion goes to other heirs. Where young children are the heirs it is possible to have an estate legally tied up for many years until the youngest heir reaches the age of consent. Even though the total estate may be required to feed, clothe and educate the children, there are stringent restrictions placed upon the use of an inheritance.

Since it is impossible for any government to pass legislation that can cover any and all circumstances, it is imperative that every adult accept their moral responsibility of determining what happens to their estate when their time on earth is over.

By careful thinking and planning and preparing the necessary documents, you can predetermine what happens if you "die before you wake."

The heirs you leave behind will be able to continue living in familiar surroundings and will not have to experience the problems inherent with a frozen estate, court orders and other difficulties. You can also make provision for the work of kingdom building to go on by naming your favorite charity as a recipient of a portion of your estate.

In the event that you should die intestate and are without heirs, the government becomes your heir.

While the major portion of what I have written above applies to married breadwinners, the same basic principles apply to singles.

Just as we live in a changing environment, so with the passage of time the needs of our dependents change as they grow toward maturity. As needs and circumstances change, our wills need to be reviewed and possibly revised.

When we consider that all that we are and all that we have is a gift from God, the Christian's response must be to plan his or her estate in such a way that "If I should die before I wake" I know that my house will be in order. The things, people and ministries that God has entrusted to my care and keeping have been provided for in a responsible way.

Merlin L. Stauffer, 76 Skyline Crescent N.E., Calgary, AB T2K 5X7, is a stewardship consultant for Mennonite Foundation of Canada.

Job opening

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Self-help and thrift shop to be opened in Hamilton in August requires a manager on a voluntary service basis.

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Barry Bishop
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(416) 521-1828.

MEDITATION

Hope amid suffering

"The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of Christ" (Revelation 11:5).

This verse calls us to hope amid suffering. It irrevocably declares, "Christ is the Lord of history."

The chapters that precede it lay before us the reality of the kingdoms of this world. The vision builds. Seals are opened, trumpets blown. War and hunger are followed by martyrdom, torture and massacre.

John's first-century readers were experienced in such circumstances. Faced by shortages of basic grains and the persecution of the Roman regime, they met discouragement.

John's description of the world situation also looks familiar today. I mourn the hunger, torture and martyrdom that surround us in Central America. I too am tempted to despair by the overwhelming specters of war and injustice. My attention caught by the spiral of pain, I ask, "What suffering will the final trumpet bring?"

Hope breaks expectations. The worldly kingdom is transformed and in God's power. ". . . is become . . ."—what a beautiful verb! Instead of declaring creation a failure, God redeems the very stuff of it. Swords are beaten into plowshares. Metamorphosis . . . the system is God's.

This hope was accomplished on Easter. It awaits completion on the Final Day. Still, it is not trapped into past and future but is ours today. God's reign is among us.

In a broadening moment of harmony in Handel's *Messiah* one can almost feel the dynamic process of becoming. Like a giant choir, we, the church, have part in God's transformation of the world. Take hope. Live it. Contrary to appearances, God's reign is sure.

Carol Rose

One humanity

The rain falls
on the just and unjust
and so does the
rain of radioactive fallout
from Kiev and Hiroshima
blowing around the world.

The rain falls
on the just and unjust
and so does the
rain of chain-reactive terrorism
from Libya and America
exploding around the world.

The rain falls
on the just and unjust
and so does the
rain of spiritually active fallout
of Truth and Love
from people of perception and
compassion in Arvada and
around the world.

Peter J. Ediger

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Summer is once again going by all too fast for most of us. These months usually include a time to change our routines—vacation. For many, this season is also a time when we experience other changes. People take new jobs, move to new locations, start new studies. For some it means the end of jobs, family moving in new directions, changing friends.

This issue contains a smorgasbord of articles to add growth and inspiration to your life.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, OH 45817; Pacific District, Carol Peterson, 25956 S. Rhoten Road, Aurora, OR 97002; Western District, Debbie Huxman, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; Window to Mission, Lois Deckert, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Richard A. Kauffman, 3003 Benham Ave. Elkhart, IN 46517.

EDITORIAL

The MBs asked forgiveness from the GCs

At the July 4-8 Conference of Mennonites in Canada sessions at Waterloo, Ont., my phone rang late the first evening. John H. Redekop, moderator of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, was looking for our chairman or the general secretary. Since he couldn't get them, he called me (since I'm on the program committee). He asked for a spot on our Saturday program, prior to the CMC leaders' plan to bring greetings at the MB conference sessions Saturday afternoon. (Several Mennonite conferences met at this time in the Waterloo area as part of the celebration of 200 years since the first Mennonites came to Canada.)

On Saturday morning, July 5, Redekop, along with the MB conference minister, Henry Brucks, and one of the older MB ministers, Isaac Thiessen, appeared before the CMC to make an official apology. It was for an MB practice of "earlier years" to excommunicate their members when they married GCs.

It was a moving scene as all three MB men expressed regret that such action had happened. (*My wife, Marge, and I related to his apology directly. I was present 30 years ago when her pastor, then also the moderator of the MB conference, told her she would have to be excommunicated upon marrying me because they could not recognize my baptism. He added, then, that he personally did not believe this way, but their church followed the conference position. In fact, they did not carry out that excommunication.*)

This historic event unfolded directly beneath a banner with the conference theme: "We Would See Jesus." Eyes grew misty and tears flowed openly as the apology was made. A stillness fell over the conference, and Jesus did seem at hand. Suddenly, one of the older, retired CMC ministers walked to the platform and embraced the MB visitors. MB moderator John H. Redekop had to pause a couple of times to swallow his emotions.

Then the CMC chairman, Jake Fransen, invited those willing to forgive, to stand. Everyone stood. This public act of forgiveness was affirmed with prayer and a hymn.

As the MB guests left the CMC sessions, many reached out to touch.

On Saturday afternoon Jake Fransen, the new chairman-elect, Walter Franz, and Larry Kehler, general secretary, delivered the following official reply: "The CMC acknowledges with humility your request for forgiveness brought to us today by your leaders. We respond with forgiveness. We recognize our own need for forgiveness where we have contributed to the misunderstandings between us.

We appreciate the sincerity of your request and affirm our partnership in the ministry of the gospel under the lordship of Christ. We pray for and commit ourselves to working for growth in the relationship between our churches and our conferences."

That response too was graciously and emotionally received.

Any effect of this upon MB-CMC (GC) relations in the future waits to be seen. But the process felt sincere. It seemed as if we did "see Jesus" at Waterloo.

For some the hurts will continue because their loved ones, who were excommunicated, died without hearing this forgiveness. That is sad. I feel that my wife and I can now lay this hurt to rest; we have forgiven.

Three special impressions stayed with me: (1) Forgiveness is one of the foundation stones in the church. All of us are sinners saved only by God's gracious forgiveness. When we seek it, he gives it. (2) It's unusual for an institution or a large organization to seek forgiveness. We must pay tribute to the Canadian MB conference for having such courage. More institutions need to follow this example. (3) How sad when Christians hurt other Christians. Wouldn't it be great for all our churches to set aside a Forgiveness Day? Seek forgiveness of one another, forgive each the other, begin a new chapter in our spiritual pilgrimage. The sooner the better for us all. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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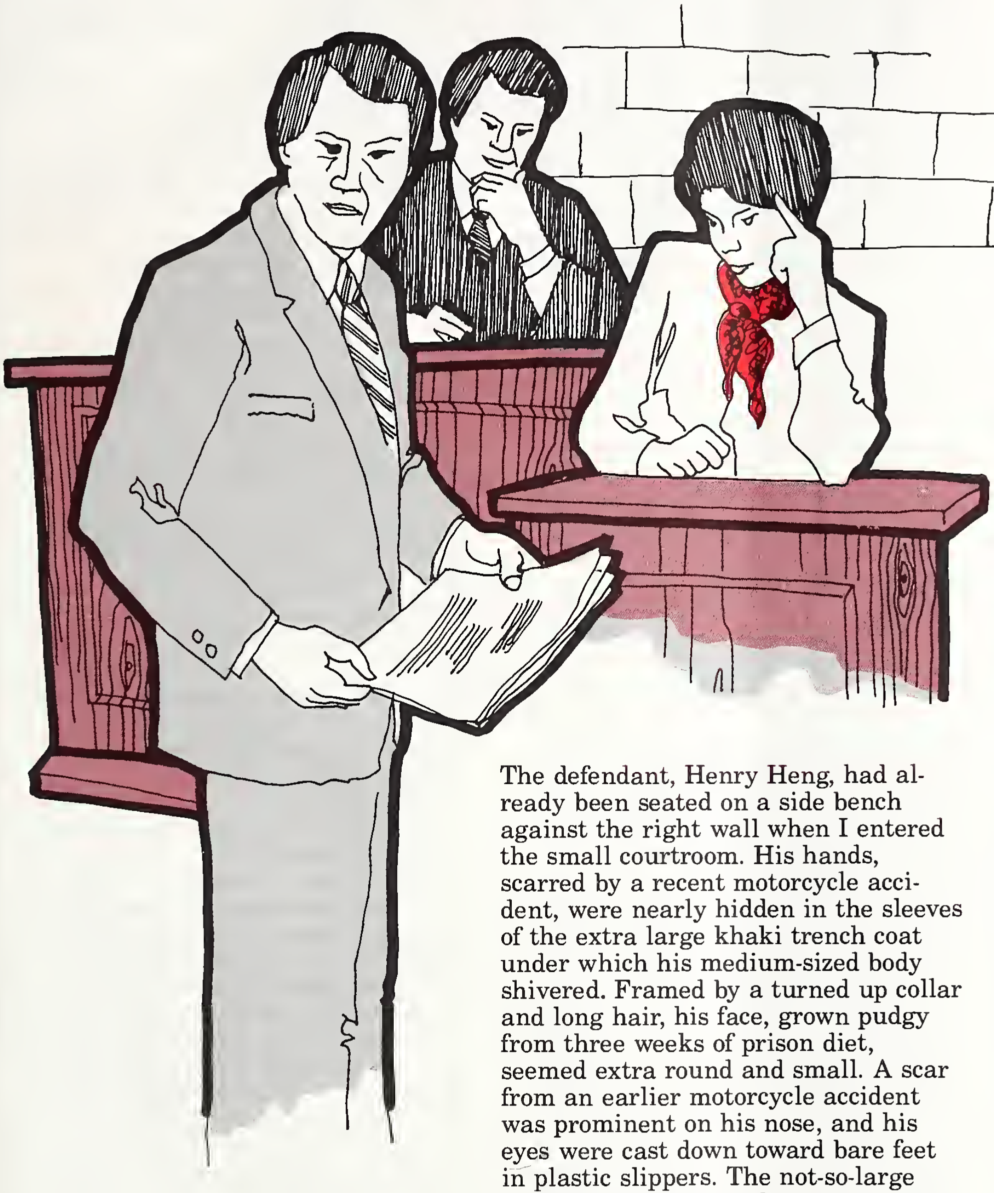


I went to court

Ken Steider

"Whatever decision the court now made, I prayed it would be for Henry's good. I could find no revenge in my heart."

The defendant, Henry Heng, had already been seated on a side bench against the right wall when I entered the small courtroom. His hands, scarred by a recent motorcycle accident, were nearly hidden in the sleeves of the extra large khaki trench coat under which his medium-sized body shivered. Framed by a turned up collar and long hair, his face, grown pudgy from three weeks of prison diet, seemed extra round and small. A scar from an earlier motorcycle accident was prominent on his nose, and his eyes were cast down toward bare feet in plastic slippers. The not-so-large square courtroom, with its gray stone walls and high ceiling, was cold and clammy, though outside the sun was shining.

At the front of the room on a greatly elevated platform was the judge's desk. On one hand sat the clerk, on the other a student judge. In front of the judge's stand, at a table on a lower platform, sat the assistant clerk.

Mr. Huang, the defense lawyer provided gratis by the court, Miss Helen Wen, another witness, Robert Chen, my reliable supporter from Mennonite Christian Hospital, and I had barely sat down in the spectators' section when Miss Wen was asked to take the stand. I was directed to a seat along the wall opposite Henry. As I sat down, he gave me a nod of recognition. Fear and anxiety were written on his face. Today he expected his sentence, which could be three to 10 years in prison.

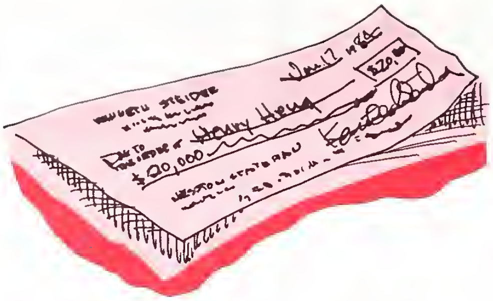
My mind went back to Jan. 13, 1984, when I had gone to Chiang Kaishek Airport to see Henry off, supposedly to Singapore. I remembered Helen Wen from Golden Asia Tours, Ltd., to whom I had given my name and telephone number. "Perhaps she could sell me my next low-fare ticket to Nebraskaland," I thought. And now Miss Wen was at the witness stand. Her fashionable dress and white jacket were a bright contrast to the cold, gray courtroom. As the interrogation began, her lips and knees quivered.

"Miss Wen," the younger-than-middle-aged judge began gently. "Did you sell Henry Heng a Singapore Airlines ticket for a Jan. 13 flight from Taipei to Singapore?"

"Yes sir," answered Miss Wen promptly.

"And how did Mr. Heng pay for his ticket?" inquired the judge.

"He did not pay, sir," replied Miss Wen with some hesitation. "Instead he gave me a promissory note."



"Did this note, in lieu of payment, satisfy you?" asked the judge, as the clerk recorded each word of both question and answer.

"No, it did not," responded Miss Wen. A slight suggestion of irritation was in her voice. "So I pursued him to Chiang Kaishek Airport," she continued, "determined to get payment before Flight 007 left for Singapore with Henry aboard."

"What happened at Chiang Kaishek Airport?" was the judge's next question.

Miss Wen was becoming braver. "Mr. Heng said he was flying to Hong Kong only and promised to return in three days and at that time would pay for the ticket. As a guarantee of payment, he handed me a U.S. check for $1,000, which he asked me not to cash. He would reclaim the check upon payment of the ticket."

"Is this the check you received?" The judge exhibited a check, which Miss Wen verified as the one Henry had given her.

It was my turn to appear before the judge. I remembered the evening of Jan. 17, four days after Henry's departure. As I was almost ready to retire for the night, the telephone rang. "This is Helen Wen," said the voice on the other end. "Have you heard from Henry?" she asked. "He promised to return by Jan. 16, but I have not seen him."

"Nor have I," I said.

"I don't think he'll ever return," continued Miss Wen. "He has cheated us both."

That Henry would not return was both a happy thought and a sad one. Had I not endured enough while he lived with me intermittently from Oct. 13 to Jan. 13? But what about the more than NT$10,000 he owed me? And what about the NT$14,000 he owed Miss Wen for his ticket? Afraid to tell her boss that she had issued a ticket without receiving payment, she had paid the fare.

"Mr. Steider," continued Miss Wen hesitantly, "at the airport last Friday Henry gave me a U.S. check for $1,000. It was made out to him and endorsed by him. Only yesterday I realized that the name you gave me at the airport and the signature on the check were the same. Did you give Henry a check for $1,000?"

"Never," I gasped.

Hanging up, I went to the drawer where I kept my blank checks from the Hesston State Bank. They began with #426. Numbers 499 and 500 were missing. Henry had stolen my checks, filled them out and forged my name. This was a criminal offense. Suppose Henry returned to Taiwan and repeated such an act. He must be stopped. He must face his wrong. I had a duty to Henry and to society. The police must know.

Henry did return and was arrested. And now, as the victim, I was in court to testify. I was in his presence, in the presence of the judge and in the presence of the Judge of the Universe.

During the previous five months my life had somehow become strangely involved with Henry. With him I had suffered the trauma of his runaway wife, whose marital status was "single." I had worked as hard as Dr. Lin to flush out Henry's kidney stone. In spite of the months of a rent-free room, in spite of unpaid telephone bills, in spite of many lies that were beginning to uncover themselves, in spite of two forged checks, I cared for Henry. Night after night we had prayed together. He had called me "brother Ken." When he wrote it, it always looked like "broken." Now sitting in court in the seat of the accused and guilty, Henry appeared to be broken. Had I done right to report him? Whatever decision the court now made, I prayed it would be for Henry's good. I could find no revenge in my heart.

The judge was addressing me. Holding out the $1,000 check received by Miss Wen, he inquired, "Who wrote the word 'void' on this check?"

"I did," I admitted, "when Miss Wen returned the check to me."

Next the judge produced check #499. Never before had I seen a check for US$20,000. And my signature was affixed. As on the other check, the signature was an accurate imitation of mine. It was made out to Henry Heng.

The judge was speaking again. "What is your opinion concerning Mr. Heng?"

Only a handful of people were in the court, but I could have faced the multitude that had appeared in my dream several nights before. I knew God was present, for many had been praying about today's court session—for Henry and for me.

I began to speak. "Sir, I stand here as the victim. However, I lost no money. It is not my wish to see Henry punished. But it is my wish to see him lead an honest life. I want him to speak the truth. I want him to work and be a responsible person, contributing to society.

"If he needs help in doing this, he should seek professional counsel. I sincerely hope that any decision made here today and this whole experience will help Mr. Heng to be the kind of person he should be."

The judge's final question startled me. Very directly he asked, "Do you forgive Mr. Heng?"

And not only before the judge but before God I said, "I do."

I was dismissed and Henry was called. With faltering steps, he took his place. His trousers were baggy, his slippers too large. And the extra large khaki trench coat seemed like his hiding place. But he stood exposed.

"Mr. Heng," asked the judge, "what have you to say for yourself?"

Sobbing penitently, Henry mumbled, almost inaudibly, "I have wronged Mr. Steider. I have wronged society. Most of all, I have wronged my God. I am truly sorry. May it please the court to give me one more chance to be an upright man."

At last the lawyer, the Honorable Mr. Huang, rose and spoke in Henry's defense. "Although Mr. Heng is guilty of forgery," said the lawyer, "this is his first offense. Moreover, he seems to be penitent and sorry for his crime. The victim has lost no money nor wishes to press charges. Therefore, for these reasons, I request that the court be lenient with Mr. Heng."

"Our decision will be made by tomorrow," announced the judge as he dismissed the court.

It was 11:15, 40 minutes after the court had begun on this memorable morning. A policeman slipped the handcuffs once more over Henry's wrists and escorted him from the courtroom. The prisoner in the extra large khaki trench coat disappeared down the hall. He returned to his cell. We stepped out into the sunshine.

On Tuesday, March 13, one week after the day in court, Henry Heng was again checking in for Singapore Airlines Flight 007, to Singapore, via Hong Kong, just as he had done two months earlier on Jan. 13. On this day, however, a wiser Henry Heng boarded Flight 007. How grateful he was that the three-year prison sentence had been decreased to 18 months. And how overjoyed and thankful he was that the sentence had been suspended for three years. He was free to go home. He had been given one more chance.

Kenneth W. Steider works as a General Conference missionary at Mennonite Christian Hospital, Hwalien, Taiwan, ROC 950. Ken writes about an experience he had in 1984.

Video
in the congregation

Glenn M. Lehman

Generations learned *vini, vidi, vici.* Julius Caesar's words are more likely to be understood today as misspellings of *video*. Compared to the revolution in the way we exchange information, Julius' conquest of France may be small potatoes.

I walk into a McDonalds for a break I deserve today. To my right a video screen shows drive-in customers. Ahead, another screen lists the inventory of fish on the grill. I stop at the bank and see myself on a security screen. Television goes along on adventures to the moon and on quests for the Titanic at the bottom of the Atlantic. Will I go to church and find it there?

Henry Renn does. "I grew up as a TV kid," he says in his office in the Lancaster (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, where he has been assistant pastor since 1982. "I sympathize with those who watch too much TV. But watching TV is not a battle we are going to win. So why not use it for our good?"

In 1950, 10 percent of homes had television. In 1980, 98 percent did. By 1970 you probably did. We were all gullible consumers of the medium in those days. By 1980 video cameras and recorders came into the pocketbook range of the average consumer. Next year one in three homes will have video recorders. From now until the time you read the last word of this article, 314 videocassettes will be sold—one sold now, and before you catch your breath, another one.

Henry Renn continues, "We handed out all those tracts and copies of the Gospel of John. Now we pass out tapes. This is the first audiovisual we've had we can send home. Someone's donating a player to the church, and we will send it to homes that need it. Films, filmstrips and overhead transparencies the people see at church once."

Video is to the television age what the mimeograph machine was to the age of print. Every church, no matter how small, can become a producer for its members. If I had any doubt that we live in a television age, it was dispelled at a conference of ministers who over lunch exegeted "Where's the beef?" more handily than the text of the keynote sermon.

Has television, like Caesar, as the old preachers predicted, made its final conquest of the known world, try as we once did to stem the flood? Or are we getting wise and taking control? Will you soon take a video camera into your hands and make television?

If there is a revolution out there in communications, it is that the tools of television are coming into the hands of the people—into even the smallest congregation. The reign of Hollywood is over. Television doesn't mean the three networks anymore. In fact, the networks' share of prime-time television went from 91 percent in 1977-78 to 73 percent in 1984-85. You can watch what you want to watch. You can rent a movie at the grocery store. If you don't like what is for sale or rent or on the channels, you can produce your own.

Does your congregation know this?

Ron Byler of the Mennonite Church's Media Ministries asked his constituency that question. He got horse-and-buggy answers. Not even a handful of our churches are creatively using video, although more than a baker's dozen borrow equipment for particular occasions. Why let the devil, to paraphrase Luther, have this new tool?

Some uses of video. Henry Renn thinks a videotape lending library is the bare-bones congregational participation in video ministry. He says, "Our video lending library took off right from the start. Many Sunday school teachers are using it in their classrooms. I hope it leads to other uses."

Other uses he finds for video include taping the worship services for shut-ins, taping the annual children's drama and other special programs, and having youth role-play Bible stories on video. "For youth tapes," he says, "the end product is not as important as the process. To be on the screen they have to research the Bible. That's motivation."

Video-future...

- *Eighty-five percent of all American homes will have at least one videocassette recorder or player in 1995, up from 28 percent at the end of 1985.*
- *Americans will spend one-fourth of their total television time viewing prerecorded videocassettes in 1995, while television networks will then command less than half of total viewing time.*
- *Americans will rent more than 4 billion videocassettes in 1995, better than five times the 1985 rentals of 700 million prerecorded cassettes.*

Winnipeg Free Press, *March 22*

At the Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church a teacher of an adult class used video "clips" from several movies about the holocaust shown on commercial television. The short clips stimulated discussion. The teacher of the third and fourth graders, who was having difficulties keeping discipline, used clips from a movie about the Ten Commandments. Video made for good discussion and discipline.

The sixth and seventh grade class at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church used video to learn critical viewing skills. Some deaf Mennonites have found that video makes possible a study of their faith in a way never before possible. Spanish-speaking congregations and pastors, especially in Texas and Florida, find video quick and responsive where institutional connections are few and distant.

First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., and the Neffsville (Pa.) Mennonite Church, to name just two others, are using video. Some examples of what they can now do or think about doing:

- tapes to orient new members or instruct seekers of baptism;
- tape segments of broadcast programs (copyright limits such use to your home) as "handouts" for discussion;
- see missionary reports from the field;
- receive seminary-level instruction at home;
- improve the skills of worship leaders, readers, choir, and music directors by playbacks of services.

This list is not exhaustive. Getting the camera into the hands of the people is where it should evolve. Possible uses are numerous:

- tape a major proposal for private and small group study before bringing to congregational meeting;
- tape a wedding rehearsal as study for a couple;
- day-in-the-life-of-the-pastor tape to acquaint members with pastor's role;
- tape on congregation's activities for showing to conference, neighbor congregations or to members away in service;
- tape to supplement the church directory and orient visitors;
- elder members reminisce on tape to preserve history of the congregation;
- Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers take along video camera to report on disaster projects;
- produce public service announcements for use on cable television spots.

Pros and cons. The church is generally reluctant to translate its message into new forms. This caution is good when it functions as a ballast against fads. However, the technology of 16 mm film has been around for 100 years, radio for 50 years and television for 35 years. Yet much of the church's education and evangelism is still "stuck in Gutenberg ink," as a writer states in *Using Non-Broadcast Video in the Church*.

Although video does not require a darkened room and is cheaper by half than film (for less than $2,000 your congregation can get set up), one can expect some resistance to video. (I remember feeling threatened the first time I saw a Bible in paperback.) Television is still perceived as entertainment, something you do when you have nothing to do, and the church is not supposed to encourage that. The small screen itself has certain built-in limitations. It is not as clear as film, the screen is smaller than life and it encourages distractions during viewing. Critics point out that video enthusiasts sometimes exhibit a sort of born again, uncritical hoopla over the medium, and there are careers and fortunes to be made.

There are legitimate reservations. Who wants a new tool when dust is gathering on the overhead projector bought in 1981? And when little creativity is being applied to the other tools at hand? What about those who choose to not expose preschool children to television? Will use of video in church sabotage their efforts? Does the religious experience by its nature thrive better in the print medium since the Bible is print?

However, the Bible is print medium only since Gutenberg. Before that it was manuscript medium amplified in stained glass, statue, story and art. Will video be the "stained glass" of the illiterate in the 21st century?

Videocom '84. If the church, congregational or churchwide, does not produce video programming, we will have to live in another's theological world and imagery. In the same way, if we did not produce our own printed materials we would have to study another curriculum. Either we can have video produced by independent companies

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, Kan., and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

for profit or by our church at a deficit but with our own theological, doctrinal and visual bias. Such efforts, albeit tentative and piecemeal, are already under way.

A consultation of video communications and the church, dubbed Videocom '84, was held at Goshen (Ind.) College in May 1984 to "create an understanding of video communication and to begin the process of developing a strategy for its use in our churches and institutions." The groups sponsoring that meeting were approximately the constellation of churches associated with Mennonite Central Committee. Since the meeting, the Mennonites and Brethren are working together in a new organization—Council on Church in Media. One of the concerns expressed was the need to prepare youth for the new electronic media age. Another was the use of this new media for conference-based theological education. It was also a consensus that congregations need to be made aware of the local possibilities.

Diane Umble, who was studying at the Annenberg School of the University of Pennsylvania, said to the group that "as a group of people we are more comfortable with what is written, what is word. It's more difficult to determine what is right in a visual language."

Ron Byler said that "if on a denominational level we cannot compete with commercial productions perhaps we ought to concentrate our efforts in encouraging our congregations to use video on a local level."

Neil Klassen of Mennonite Brethren Communications asked why we are not willing to apply the same standards to video that we apply in print.

When a church uses video programs as part of its ministry, group members will learn more than just the information presented in the programs. They will learn more about the television medium itself. Gradually they will develop critical judgment that will help them evaluate the video that they are regularly exposed to—television programs, commercials, movies and video games. After group members have learned to make full use of purchased video programs, they may also create their own. They will come to realize their power to be creators of video, not just consumers.

The finished videotapes need not be slick or professional. The best shows will be the ones that have fostered fellowship, preserved special moments and treasured memories, and given group members new understanding of themselves and each other. The closer one's emotional distance to the material, the greater tolerance one has for amateurish production.

Video is, simply, private television. It is another channel of communications which, like the mimeograph machine, can build up community from among the rank and file. Theology can even shift with grass-roots acceptance of a new tool. We saw that done with audio tapes during the era of tent revivals. We have seen an ayatollah in exile in Paris give a king in Iran a Humpty Dumpty fall by audio cassettes. We have also seen video, as broadcast television, make a presidency in 1980.

Video, unlike Julius Caesar, will not stop what was before. The French don't bow to a Roman. Video will not replace any other communications media. The teacher will be no less important. We will not have miniature screens instead of church bulletins. The mighty denominational publishing houses will not sell out. *A Meetinghouse article*

Glenn Lehman, 542 East Orange St., Lancaster, PA 17602, is a member of the East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church and is editor of the Lancaster Conference News.

Video resource for church planting

Pastors and media placement people are discovering that the new Mennonite video magazine "All God's People" opens doors of opportunity for communicating to neighbors and friends.

Jim Miller, pastor of Community Mennonite Church in Lexington, Ky., used the video magazine to "entertain" five visitors from the community. He discovered that folks were more open to come when they knew they would be viewing a videocassette involving Mennonites.

The new church planting group of eight that Jim pastors dropped their usual singing, Bible study and discussion in favor of viewing the tape, discussing it and sharing around refreshments.

Jim also arranged for the local public access television station to telecast the video magazine 10 times over a three-week period, with the name of their church and a telephone number at the end.

In Johnstown, Pa., Kurt M. Horst, pastor of Weaver Mennonite Church, was able to place a program on Channel 9 each Thursday evening for several weeks.

This first edition of "All God's People" contains four stories that show Mennonites living their faith in daily life. Mennonite Board of Missions is making this resource available for congregations to place on their local TV stations and cable systems as an outreach to their communities. For help in arranging for its release on your local TV station or cable system, call or write Lois Hertzler, Media Ministries, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (703) 434-6701.

Your pastor needs you

Anonymous by request

Right now someone you know has no one to talk to. They are miles from family. They seldom enjoy full and free social exchange within the community. They work long hours and give selflessly of their own resources for the sake of others.

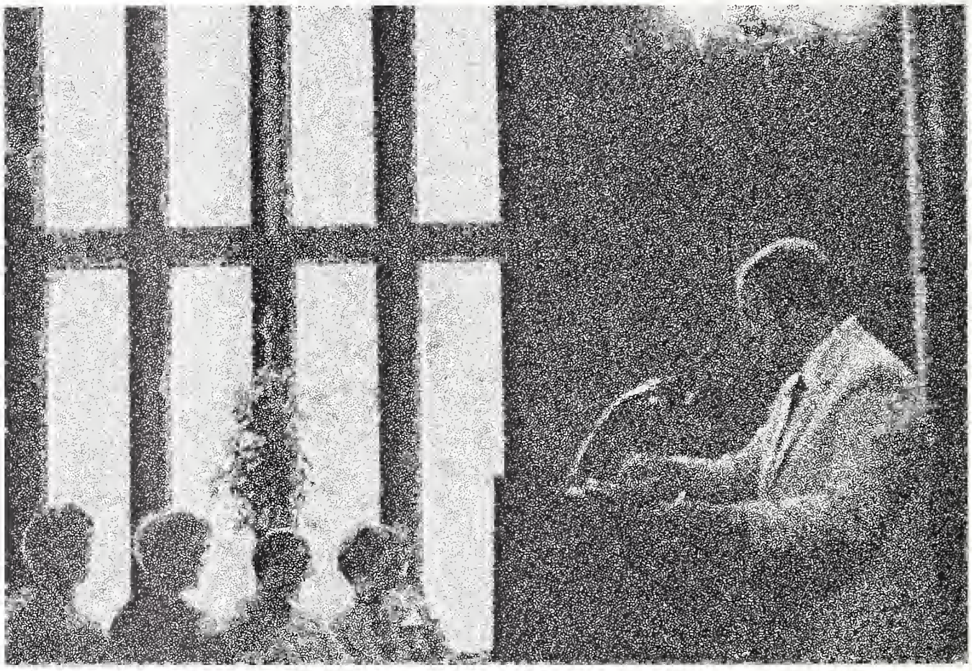
Right now your pastor needs you. You may think, "Not my pastor." But as a pastor, take my word for it. Your pastor needs you.

Your pastor needs you because few people talk to him or her about a pastor's personal well-being. Most generally the pastor is asked for opinion, scriptural insight, spiritual direction or assistance in crisis. Seldom does anyone seek out the pastor to give counsel or just listen. In fact, I know of few church members who talk to a pastor about the pastor's own welfare. Who does not need a friend to talk to from time to time?

Your pastor needs you because normally he or she is not serving in the home community around family or friends. If you know a pastor who is serving near home, you know a most fortunate pastor. Of the pastors I know, the one closest to home is about a two-hour drive away. The furthest is a two-day trip away. How long has it been since you saw your family and friends? How long has it been since your pastor has seen family and friends? When was the last time your pastor had the privilege of being home at Easter, Thanksgiving or Christmas?

Your pastor needs you because normally he or she does not experience the full social benefit of living in a Christian community. Experience shows that the pastor and family are left out of much conversation and many neighborly gatherings. For example, in one setting all the girls of a particular age group were invited to swim at a church member's home except the pastor's daughter. She alone was left to sob out the question "Why not me?"

Your pastor needs you because he or she works long hours that seem to be without direct reward. Some church people actually believe the pastor only works when he or she visits the hospital or on Sunday morning. Others believe a pastor is vacationing when he or she goes to a church conference. To the contrary, the average pastor spends 40 hours a week preparing for Sunday morning worship, 20 hours of preparation for Sunday evening worship, 10 hours of preparation for various special programs, four hours of preparation for Bible study, and on the average about six hours in weekly business meetings. On top of these hours are hospital visits, follow-up visits, visitor visits and the expectation of visiting in homes. The average work week totals between 60 and 80 hours with no overtime compensation.



The pastor is often isolated from people.

Where can we get a handle on turning this around? It must begin with consciousness-raising and intentional response to the pastor and family.

Try to strike up a conversation with your pastor about his or her interests. Ask specifically how things are going at home. Ask if there are frustrations, dreams or goals. Ask what hurts the pastor may have and how the hurts can be healed. Make your pastor a friend by sending an "I care" note.

Look at your pastor's situation closely. Is there a way to ease the burden of distance from family? Is it possible to rearrange tradition once every few years to allow the pastor the privilege of being with his or her family at Easter, Thanksgiving or Christmas?

Look around at your social life. Realize that you and your established friends and family were enjoying each other before the pastor arrived on the scene. Realize that quite by accident you are flowing with the status quo and are not aware when you shut pastor and family out of your circle.

Try to recognize the pastor's hard work with simple words of thanks or encouragement. Acknowledge your awareness of the long hours and express your appreciation for the services to the church. It is appropriate to thank the pastor with a gift. When most of society does well at work, they receive a raise, promotion or commendation from their employer. You are the pastor's employer. If you do not take the time to express in measurable means your appreciation of your pastor, the pastor may wonder about his or her performance and, as you would, may doubt his or her ability.

What a shame if on the last and great day of the Lord we should face his glory and he would say to us, "Inasmuch as you have not done it unto the least of these, my pastors, you have not done it unto me." Pastors too are the image of Christ on earth.

Faith is faith-*fulness*—Habakkuk 2:1-4

Thomas Finger

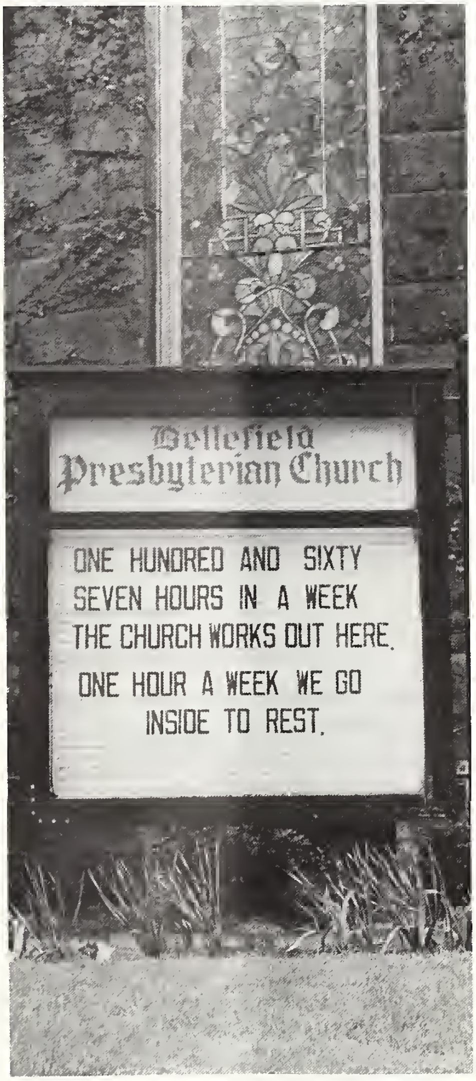
What is faith? Few questions are as central to Christianity. According to Paul, the gospel can be summarized in the words "the just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11). Since Paul contrasts faith with "works," many assume that faith is a passive attitude. In addition, since faith involves firm belief in certain things, many assume that it is incompatible with the slightest uncertainty.

In our modern world, however, evil and suffering are widespread and call for urgent action. Moreover, their presence raises doubts about God's goodness. If "having faith" means to be inactive and to suppress all questions, people of faith will have to retreat from today's problems. Indeed, many Christians have felt that keeping the faith involves just this.

However, Paul took the statement "the just shall live by faith" from Habakkuk 2:4. And Habakkuk, as our previous studies have shown, was greatly distressed by the injustice and violence running rampant in Judah during 625-600 B.C. He repeatedly asked how a just God could allow this (Habakkuk 1:2-4). When God finally responded (1:5-11), Habakkuk learned, to his horror, that God would eliminate injustice in Judah by allowing the Babylonians to conquer it. But this seemed even less consistent with God's justice, for the Babylonians were extremely cruel (1:7, 9, 11). Moreover, it seemed God would wholly abandon his people, whom he had sworn to defend. Whatever "faith" comes to mean in Habakkuk 2:4, then, must have relevance for the issues raised by evil and suffering.

Habakkuk 2:4 is God's answer to the torturous questions the prophet raised in chapter 1. As happens to us sometimes, Habakkuk's prayers for light seemed to be answered by increasing darkness. He may well have felt like quitting, but at this critical juncture Habakkuk decides to wait (2:1). He has raised objections against God's plans for which he finds no answer (1:12-17). Yet, rather than turning away in despair, the prophet remains open.

And Habakkuk does begin receiving answers, although at first in an apparently incomplete and confusing way. Notice that before the answer or "vision" comes in verse 4, verse 3 describes it in ways which seem contradictory. On one hand, the vision "pants" or "hastens towards the end"; "it will surely come, it will not delay!" Yet, on the other hand, "the vision still awaits its time"; "if it seem slow, wait for it." What is happening? Is God still refusing to answer the prophet clearly?



On the contrary, verse 3 expresses an important distinction between divine and human perspectives. God is telling Habakkuk that from his point of view he is acting with urgency. Nevertheless, what is certain and soon forthcoming from the divine perspective may not be fully accomplished for years or even centuries from the human perspective. Therefore God's answer to Habakkuk—and often God's answer to us—involves the paradox: "Be reassured that I will act . . . but continue to wait."

But what finally is "the vision"? It is briefly stated: "The one whose soul is puffed up shall fail, but the righteous one shall live by faithfulness" (2:4). God tells Habakkuk that people who exalt their own desires, values and thoughts above God's, even though they may seem to be succeeding at present, in the long run will fail. However, even in times of great injustice and of confusion as to what God is doing, those who keep on walking faithfully with God will continue in the way that leads to life.

What does this tell us about faith? Faith certainly involves waiting and complete dependence on God. Nevertheless, since it includes walking continually in God's ways no matter how bad things get, faith is active too. Is faith opposed to every kind of doubt? Well, since walking through difficult situations often raises questions about what God is doing, faith often involves wrestling with them. According to Habakkuk, faith is not passive and unquestioning. Rather, faith is "faith-*fulness*"—a continuing openness and responsiveness to God that involves activity and raising questions.

This is also what Paul means by faith. Paul's supreme example of faith is Abraham, who walked toward God's promise for years amid all kinds of trials (Romans 4:17-22). It is also the meaning of Habakkuk 2:4 for the other New Testament writer who uses it. Hebrews 10:38 quotes this verse to encourage readers to keep persevering in difficult times. This immediately precedes Hebrews 11, the great "faith chapter," which gives numerous stories of those who continued to trust God in the most challenging and puzzling of circumstances. *Third study in a series on Habakkuk*

Thomas Finger, 5748 W. Race, Chicago, IL 60644, is professor of systematic theology at Northern Baptist Seminary and is a member of First Mennonite Church at Oak Park.

Evangelism at the well

Kenneth L. Gibble

I begin with confession. I plead guilty to the sin that plagues many who read the Bible frequently. It's the sin of being contented with the obvious.

Case in point—the story of Jesus and the woman at the well (John 4). It's a familiar story, maybe too familiar. Jesus, in conversation with the Samaritan woman, offers several profound spiritual truths and utters such momentous statements as, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. . . . God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

These are significant sayings; Christians have treasured them and found them rich in meaning, challenge and comfort for centuries. It's easy to overlook both the setting for these statements as well as the character of the woman, who is never even named. Both seem to be of minor importance, almost irrelevant. The woman may strike us as not very bright. She keeps missing the spiritual point of Jesus' remarks, and he has to explain patiently to her what he really means.

But a closer look at the story reveals some surprises. The Samaritan woman is clever and witty. She converses with Jesus as an equal, even banters with him.

What makes this so astounding is that women simply were not supposed to do that kind of thing in those days. The rabbis counseled Jewish men, "Let no one talk with a woman in the street, no, not with his own wife." In addition the woman was a Samaritan, and Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. Their ancestry was mixed, "corrupted," the Jews of that time would have said.

How amazed the woman must have been when Jesus said, "Give me a drink." The predictable response on her part would have been to do as he told her without a question, keeping her eyes averted as was considered proper for someone of her status.

But not this woman. She burst out, "How can you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?"

This was unthinkable impertinence. But Jesus does not rebuke her, nor does he answer her question. Instead he initiates a verbal joust, a battle of wits that is simply astonishing. He baits her: "If only you knew what God gives, and who it is asking you for a drink, you would have asked *him* and he would have given you living water." It's the kind of thing you say to people when you want to get a rise out of them.

She takes up the challenge. With good-natured brashness she asks Jesus who he thinks he is anyway.

I find it interesting that in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions verses 16, 17 and 18 are omitted from the lectionary (Scripture lessons read in public worship). I think I understand why. If this passage is read in the traditional way, with sober attention given to the profound spiritual statements of Jesus, then it's hard to know what to do with verses 16-18. They contain a reference to the woman's relation with men. To the pious, these words show both the woman and Jesus in an unfavorable light and certainly include no great spiritual truths.

> *"God will not permit us to make faith a pure, sober and therefore irrelevant slice of life."*

But with our new reading of the story these verses are essential . . . and delightful. Up to this point the woman has been matching Jesus quip for quip. Now we can almost see the twinkle in his eye. With no warning he says, "Go home, call your husband and come back." There seems no good explanation for this comment other

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than an attempt by Jesus to score a telling point in their verbal duel.

His remark hits home. Her breezy, semisarcastic manner evaporates. "I have no husband," she says quickly. Too quickly. Jesus immediately follows up his advantage. "You've had five husbands, and the man you're living with now. . . ."

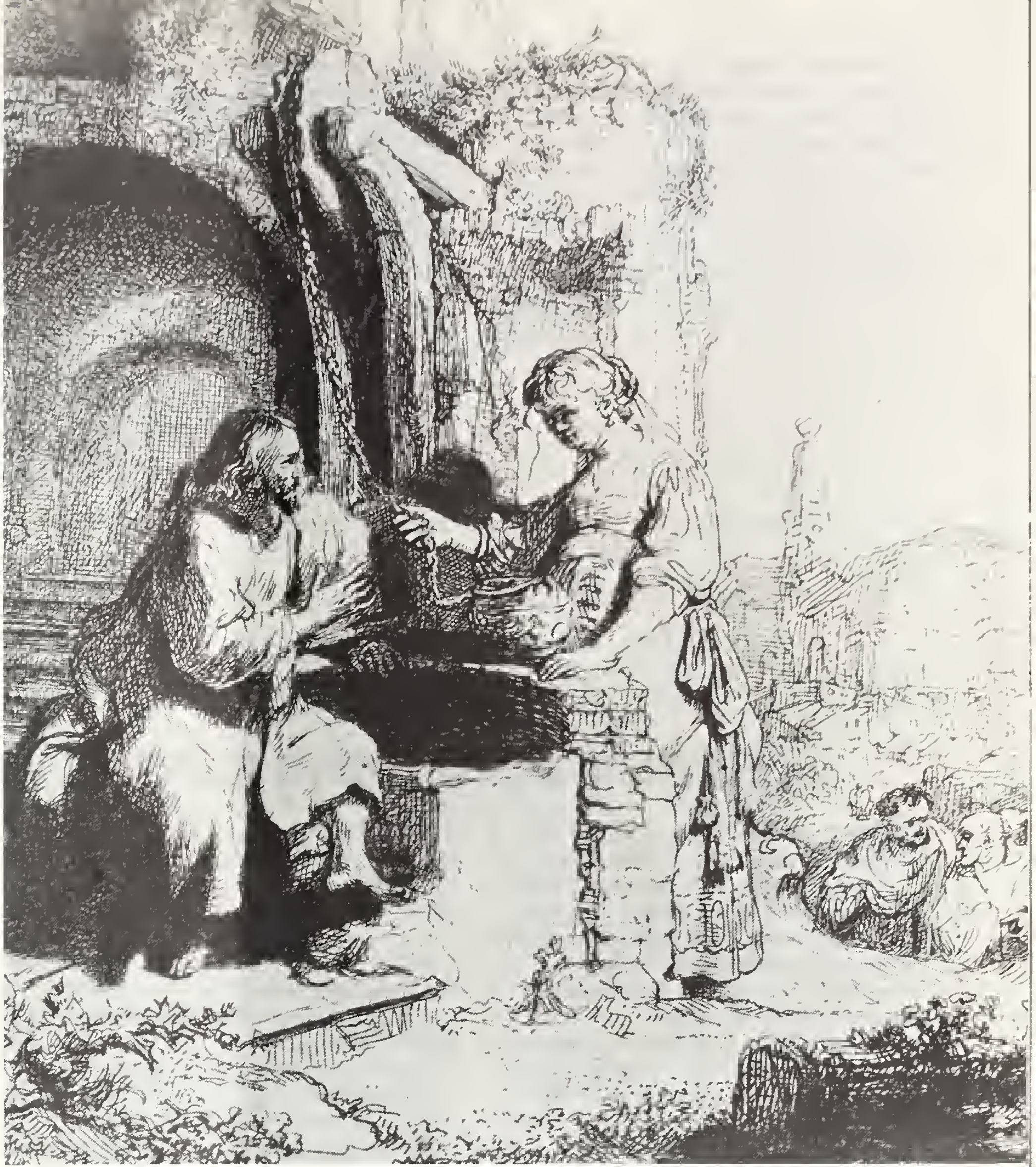
A contented-with-the-obvious reading of these words might lead us to suppose Jesus was condemning the woman on the grounds of immorality. It's likely he did not approve of her living arrangements, but there isn't a hint here that he's making a judgment. I hear a chuckle in his voice, almost as if he is thinking, That ought to hold her for a while.

She must have been completely taken aback. How on earth could he have known all about that? But she recovers her equilibrium quickly. She does what all good debaters do when they're in trouble—she changes the subject. And she even manages to regain the flippancy she had lost for a moment. "So you're a prophet. All right, then, where is the right place to worship, here on the mountain like we Samaritans say or in Jerusalem where the Jews insist?"

Jesus cannot help getting in a jab at what he considers the blindness of the Samaritan's religion. "You worship with your eyes shut; we Jews worship with our eyes open, for the salvation of mankind will come from us." It is another comment best seen as part of the verbal game they are playing.

Suddenly Jesus changes his tack. We can imagine his face losing the half-smile it has worn and assuming a thoughtful, faraway look. "The time is coming and already is here when true worshipers won't concern themselves with where to worship but will worship God as God ought to be worshiped, by the power of the Spirit."

The woman flows with his shift. She introduces the subject of the Messiah, for whom both Jews and Samaritans looked. "I know the Messiah is coming and will tell us everything." What prompted her to say that? Perhaps it was what Jesus said or perhaps it was the way he said it. We cannot know. Neither can we know how the conversation might have gone from there, for now the disciples return and, though they say nothing, their suspicion and disapproval of their master conversing with this Samaritan in skirts are all too obvious.



This drawing by Rembrandt is entitled "Jesus with the Woman at the Well."

She can read their thoughts. She leaves so quickly she forgets her water jar. And when she reaches the town, she tells everybody, "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" She isn't convinced, even though Jesus had told her he *was* the Messiah. It could well be he had said it with that twinkle in his eye again. That would have been just like him.

So much of the time we drive a wedge between the holy and the profane. We compartmentalize our existence: religious matters here, family affairs there, work concerns over there. One thing we gain from the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman is the truth that God will not let us divide life into neat categories. God will not permit us to make faith a pure, sober and therefore irrelevant slice of life. In this earthy story from the Gospel, Jesus is one moment twitting the woman about her love life and the next moment proclaiming his remarkable insights about true worship of God.

And there is something else, something the woman shows us. She was not afraid to risk being put down. She also was not afraid to come up against new ideas, to have her most cherished notions challenged. And when she found something good, she did not keep it for herself. She did not wait until she had all the answers. Her message to her neighbors was one of mixed hope and doubt: "Could this be the Messiah?"

The footnote to the story indicates just how powerful the sharing of her experience was. "Many Samaritans of that town came to believe in him because of the woman's testimony."

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"In a world which is only a hair trigger away from destruction, Christian unity is not a luxury," said Arie R. Brouwer, general secretary of the National Council of Churches.

Programs for the West Coast Mennonite Writers Workshop are now available from sponsoring organizations. Scheduled to meet at Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore., Oct. 17-19, the workshop offers more than two dozen seminars. The sessions begin on Friday evening with a keynote address by Katie Funk Wiebe, an English teacher at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan., and a Mennonite writer of distinction. The closing feature on Sunday afternoon is an editors' hot seat. Included in the two-day schedule, among others, are seminars on news and article writing, stories and poetry. Also there are to be sessions on book publishing, copyrights and various aspects of editor-writer relationships. Sunday morning worship is led by Willard Roth, assistant to the president of Mennonite Board of Missions. Though it is assumed that the West Coast location will make it of particular interest to writers of this area, people from other areas of North America are welcome as well. A copy of the program and a registration form are available from West Coast Mennonite Writers' Workshop, c/o Shirley Yoder, Western Mennonite School, 9054 Wallace Road, N.W., Salem, OR 97304.

NEWS

Quality of life, meaning of death discussed

Medical convention considers bioethics

Estes Park, Colo.—"Bioethics" is the "new kid on the block." That word in the next few years will become familiar to most people. It means "a discipline dealing with the ethical implications of biological research and applications, especially in medicine" (*Webster's Ninth*, p. 152).

Recent discoveries make it possible to generate pregnancies outside the uterus (ectogenesis), prolong "brain-dead" people in the dying process, manipulate gene makeup, discover handicaps at early stages of fetal development. This creates many hitherto unheard of ethical dilemmas. Does "can do" mean "must or should do"?

The July 17-20 Mennonite Medical Association (MMA) and Mennonite Nurses Association (MNA) joint annual convention, held at the YMCA camp here, grappled with "Christian Responses to Bioethical Dilemmas."

Quality of life. Vernard Eller, well-known Church of the Brethren writer and professor of religion, suggested that all the bioethical dilemmas must be examined in light of "God's will for us on earth as it is in heaven." Eller challenged the popular view about "quality of life." Admitting that Christian bioethics is "one very complex, sticky issue," Eller said ethics has been too ready to declare the highest "quality of life" as that life which is lived most happily and most smoothly. On those terms, he said, biblical people like Jeremiah (the "weeping prophet") and Paul (with a permanent thorn in the flesh) missed it.

Eller argued that the Bible presents a different view for quality of life than what is popularly promoted. The apostle Paul speaks of God's "amazing grace" as the foundation for his fulfillment. God's "holy" health often reflects a correlation between "agony of soul and creativity."

Collaborative reproduction. Anne Krabill Hershberger, nursing professor at Goshen (Ind.) College, said that "reproduction used to be simple." Marriage led to sex and sex led to babies. Today there are all kinds of possibilities for "collaborative reproduction," from artificial insemination to "rent-a-womb" to elective gene splicing.

Hershberger clearly painted the dilemmas but then challenged Christians to optimistically focus our hope in Christ and in his community and proceed with the best options. "We can move with confidence because of God's leading in the past," she concluded.

The meaning of death. Willard Krabill, a physician, said too many people suffer from "moral laryngitis" when it comes to dying. While most people today can influence their living and dying, only about 10 percent actively take part in life-and-death decisions. Christians must, in a new way, demonstrate the biblical teaching that death is not always the enemy. We see life as a gift and a preparation for an enduring life that begins with death.

Krabill suggested that today's health-care practices and costs demand that the Christian community commit itself to be involved with people in both "living" and "dying" issues. It is false to assume that prolonging life is always good and terminating always bad. One respondent to Krabill said, "We desperately need a new attitude toward death, and we need an attitude toward life without glorifying it so much."

Winifred Waltner, left, and Chinese doctor Rujing Wang sang "Jesus loves me" in Chinese. Dr. Wang is being hosted in the United States this year by a group of Kansas Mennonite physicians. Wang comes from Guizhou, China.

God's-eye view of the poor. Stanley Godshall, former missionary doctor in Tanzania now practicing in Pennsylvania, told the doctors and nurses, "Today's Golden Rule says, If you have the gold, you make the rules." That view says that the issue for many poor people is not "know-how" but "know-who." It is not God's view that there are "haves" and "have-nots"; that is our doing.

The concept of jubilee practiced in parts of Africa could be a model for Mennonites to pursue, said Godshall.

Former Mennonite Voluntary Service directors Gene Stoltzfus (far right in photo) and Dale Suderman (center) joined 300 other protesters at the Federal Building in Chicago to demonstrate their opposition to the congressional approval of $100 million to be sent to the contras in Nicaragua. The protesters carried body bags symbolizing the deaths of Central American people due to U.S. military aid. One day after the June 26 demonstration the World Court ruled that the Reagan administration had broken international law and violated Nicaraguan sovereignty by aiding the antigovernment rebels.

Thirty people attended the international seminar on Anabaptism held in Salazar de las Palmas in eastern Colombia April 15-24. Representatives from four Anabaptist church groups in Venezuela and Colombia attended. John Driver and James Sauder, Mennonite missionaries from Uruguay and the Dominican Republic, respectively, were the invited speakers.

Wealth tends to remove the close proximity between good and evil, thus keeping us from seeing Jesus among the poor. While we tend to view God as Creator and Dispenser of "things," Africans view God as Ancestor and Giver of "life." They see God more as a compassionate mother than an awesome father. Christians must more and more "look for Jesus among the poor," Godshall told the convention.

Tears or tirades. Vernard Eller told the final convention session that Genesis 3 can be a model for Christian responses to any dilemmas. A typical human response to dilemma is the "snake-in-our-garden" to blame. We "tirade" against snakes, like the "fat broad" in the comics.

When God looks at the dilemma, he weeps with the fallen. He provides covering for the naked. Jesus too did this. When he came to Lazarus' grave, he wept. He wept at the sight of a stubborn Jerusalem. And he wept in compassionate forgiveness for his crucifiers.

Business. In its business sessions, the Mennonite Medical Association was told that its Student Elective Term program (opportunities to study medicine in cross-cultural settings) had one of its busiest years ever. MMA accepted 25 new members. Concern was voiced about possible draft legislation for health-care professionals. The 1987 convention will meet Aug. 6-9 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa. *Bernie Wiebe*

Self-help and thrift shop to be opened in Hamilton in August requires a manager on a voluntary service basis.

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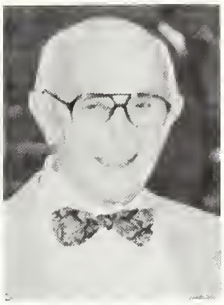
J. Winfield Fretz named interim COE executive



Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—J. Winfield Fretz, North Newton, has accepted an appointment as interim executive secretary of the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Fretz begins his new duties (for a 12-month period) Sept. 1, succeeding J. W. Sprunger, who has taken a marketing position with Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa.

A seasoned educator, administrator and churchman, Fretz comes to his new assignment from a career that began with teaching economics and sociology (followed by church history) at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in 1942. Leaving Bethel in 1963, he became founding president of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., a position he held for 10 years. He has also been acting president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary (1982-83) and Bethel College (1959-60). He is now completing a book-length manuscript called *Sociology of Mennonites in Waterloo County* for Wilfred Laurier University Press. He also has cross-cultural experience in Paraguay and Mexico.

Originally from Deep Run West Mennonite Church, Bedminster, Pa., Fretz was also present at the beginnings of Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa. He and his wife, Marguerite, are now members of Bethel College Mennonite Church.

Fretz is a graduate of Bluffton (Ohio) College, the University of Chicago (M.A. and Ph.D.) and Chicago Theological Seminary (B.D.). He also holds an honorary doctor-of-letters degree from the University of Waterloo.

J. Winfield and Marguerite Fretz are the parents of three sons and one daughter.

Wendy Kroeker appointed MVS administrator

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Wendy Kroeker, 27, has accepted a three-year assignment as Mennonite Voluntary Service associate director for the Western United States, under the auspices of the General Conference Mennonite Church. She is in the process of moving from Princeton, N.J., to the Denver area, where she will be based.

Kroeker is a graduate of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif. (M.A. in theology) and of the University of Waterloo (where her honors thesis was on "Mennonites and Their Use of Leisure Time"). She has experience with camping, child care, canoeing, recreation for handicapped and non-handicapped groups, aquatics, leading Bible studies, counseling and public speaking.

"My motivation for service," says Kroeker, "is the life and example of Christ. Christ came with good news for the poor and oppressed, and I want to share in that message."

Kroeker grew up in Winkler, Man., and is married to Gordon Zerbe. She succeeds Lynn Keenan, who will attend graduate school in Boulder, Colo.

For the first time in the history of Mennonite work with Indians in the Paraguayan Chaco, 121 young Indians have received the official document, called "baja," exempting them from Paraguay's obligatory military service. About 500 people attended the May 23 ceremony at Casuarina, site of the agricultural training school from which the men had graduated.

Dawn Graber (left) talks with a mother and child at the Glades Health Clinic.

The evangelist thundered against AIDS that night in Belle Glade, Fla. Punishment for sins, he said. Dawn Graber of Stryker, Ohio, heard him that night last fall, and it still makes her angry. "How can AIDS be punishment for sin?" she asks. "What has a 4-year-old boy that I know with the disease done to deserve it? What about Ray? He is a white, heterosexual male." Graber, a registered nurse, and her husband, Doug, a business manager for a neighborhood housing cooperative, have been serving with Mennonite Central Committee U.S. in Belle Glade. Graber has watched over 20 people die of AIDS.

COE works at healing and renewal among commission, staff

Newton, Kan.—The Commission on Education members and staff held several meetings during the week of the General Conference triennial sessions July 21-27 in Saskatoon to discuss their ongoing relationships. The meetings ended with tears and some qualified reconciliation.

Fred Loganbill, a mediator from Newton, was called in to lead the meetings. He called for everyone to "focus on the future," to ask, "What can help the relationship?"

One by one, commission members, who had met earlier in closed session, acknowledged the breakdown of communication between them and staff other than the executive secretary (see the June 24 issue of *The Mennonite*, p. 280). At the same time, no one offered an easy solution. COE member Michelle Friesen-Carper asked, "What does it mean to be a church and a business?"

Ben Sprunger, COE member on General Board, said that the General Board had passed a resolution that it "authorize a process to establish clearer procedures for review, termination, hiring and grievance of employees." This was spurred in part by a proposed resolution brought by Jubilee Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan., which requested a review of the past, reconciliation for the present and open review by staff and commissions of employment policies. The General Board further passed a resolution to "support a process of reviewing the COE termination of Randy and Myrna Krehbiel and seeking reconciliation." Jubilee Church subsequently agreed to not bring a resolution before the conference body.

Loganbill summed up the discussion thus: "There has been success in the product; the problem has been communication and relationships."

COE members affirmed a July 15 letter to the commission from eight staff members that included a number of confessions, asked forgiveness for "our failure to understand your expectations of us" and committed them "to working to restore the bonds of trust so vital to the continuation of the ministry of the Commission on Education."

J. Winfield Fretz, who was earlier affirmed as interim executive secretary for COE, beginning Sept. 1, picked up on this theme. "No changing of structures will necessarily prevent problems," he said. What is needed is "a declaration of trust."

In a second meeting that night (July 21) COE chairperson Fred Unruh read confessions by the commission to outgoing executive secretary J. W. Sprunger and to Myrna and Randy Krehbiel, COE secretaries for family life through Aug. 31. Each confession expressed "deeply felt regret" and asked forgiveness for the pain each person has experienced.

The commission asked the Krehbiels to serve as coordinators of Mennonite Marriage Encounter during a five-month transitional period through January 1987. This was to affirm a proposal MME team couples had made through the Krehbiels in April. The Krehbiels will work primarily with Fretz and MME team couples in reviewing and planning the MME program.

The latter arrangement was worked out after meetings with several MME team couples. In a third meeting on July 25, Unruh read a statement on behalf of the commission that expressed regret, a lack of understanding MME's operating style, acknowledged hurt and confessed COE's share of responsibility for the pain the MME couples experienced.

In another action, the commission expressed appreciation for the July 15 letter from staff and acknowledged "with gratitude that the letter has been an effective instrument for healing and renewal."

Several COE members and staff said that the COE report to the conference, which was given on July 23 and focused on "shalom," was helpful. Staff member Rosella Wiens Regier called it "redemptive."

Staff member Maynard Shelly said, "I'm not satisfied with where we are, . . . but where we are is a miracle." Then he and Unruh, who had exchanged many letters in the previous months, embraced. Others joined them, and many tears flowed.

With confessions made, several agreements in writing and some emotions released, the meetings ended. Loganbill thanked everyone for their hard work. *Gordon Houser*

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"What does it mean to be faithful?" asks James Gingerich, who just finished a term as vice president of the General Conference, upon return from a Mennonite leaders tour in Central America. Describing the "very intense three weeks" in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, Gingerich says he has never before heard so many horror stories in such a short time. "To illustrate the climate of fear," he says, "in El Salvador we were told to keep our notes with us at all times." A Mennonite in Nicaragua asked, "What are you going to do when your government starts dropping bombs on us—your brothers and sisters?"

Mayumi Miki was commissioned April 27 as the first Japanese woman to serve as pastor of a Mennonite congregation. She hopes to eventually serve as a missionary in China. Peter Derksen, missionary to Japan under the Commission on Overseas Mission, was speaker for the occasion, while COM missionary Peter Voran led the commissioning service. Miki, 30, has been serving the Fukuoka Mennonite Church since March, following her graduation from Tokyo Biblical Seminary.

The pastor of an emerging Protestant congregation in East Germany says that the church there is alive and well. Bruno Schottstaedt said that churches don't have to register with the government and are free to witness in society. Schottstaedt has had periodic contacts with Mennonites since receiving a Bible from a Mennonite while he was hospitalized as a prisoner of war in Belgium during World War II.

Mennonite groups in Mexico cooperate in housing project

Ciudad Guzman, Mexico (MCC)—Volunteers from the northern Mexico Mennonite colonies, the National Evangelical Mennonite Church of Mexico City and Mennonite Central Committee are cooperating in an earthquake reconstruction project here.

The three groups signed an agreement earlier this year that called for the building of 75 to 100 houses for poor families who lost their homes in last September's quake.

Carlos Diaz, a Mennonite from Mexico City, is construction supervisor for the project. The Hilfskomitee of the Mexican Mennonite colonies is providing five volunteers to work in construction, and MCC worker Carl Epp directed the project until Aug. 1. Don and Esther Clymer of Harrisonburg, Va., began directing the project on Aug. 1.

Herman Bontrager, MCC secretary for Latin American programs, reports that constituency giving for the reconstruction project had been generous and that workers are considering expanding the project. CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) also funds the project with a matching grant.

Epp reports that a new kind of construction is being introduced into the area. Traditionally brick construction is used, but some new Mennonite-built houses are made of poured, reinforced concrete. Steel forms for the houses were designed and made by Mennonite colonists in Cuahtemoc, Mexico. Epp says this type of construction is more earthquake resistant, is faster than bricklaying and does not require skilled bricklayers.

Local Mexicans have been hired to supplement Mennonite volunteer work. Several of these workers have received new houses through the project and are willing to work long hours to help others complete their houses. With the rainy season beginning, many families are anxious to move from their makeshift shelters into drier quarters.

Epp reports that 20 houses have been completed and several more are under construction. MCC is also building a house for the construction supervisor and his family on a purchased lot at the building site in Ciudad Guzman.

A family stands in front of a new house in Ciudad Guzman.

The Mexico City Mennonites hope to begin a church planting program in the community and construct a small chapel on the same site. Epp writes, "A spiritual ministry resulting from doors being opened by an MCC program has been the pattern in many countries, and it may happen again here in Mexico."

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A 13-week study guide, being developed by Mennonite Mutual Aid, will touch on prolonging life, organ transplants, cost containment, procreation and other medical ethics issues. The guide is intended for use by groups, such as Sunday school classes.

The fall conference sponsored by the Illinois Mennonite Conference and the Central District (west) Conference will be held Nov. 14-15 at the Hopedale Mennonite Church and will be hosted by the Boynton and Hopedale Mennonite churches. "Shalom: Living Christ's Peace" is the theme. Ron Sider, professor at Eastern Baptist Seminary, will be the keynote speaker. Programs are being planned for children and high school youth.

The Canadian government is spending many dollars to persuade Labrador residents to allow a NATO base at Goose Bay. The Innu (native people who live and hunt in nearby "unpopulated areas") are opposed to the proposal. They are concerned about the effects of low-flying aircraft on caribou herds, bird-nesting habits, birthing of fur-bearing animals and their own ability to continue living in rural areas. They're also concerned about the social impact of an influx of transient people, mostly single males, the availability of jobs and easy cash, increased alcohol use and the consequent family violence.

Indonesian Mennonites explore ties with MCC, Europeans

Kaliurang, Indonesia (MCC)—"It's like a mini-Mennonite World Conference," exclaimed Paulus Soetartono, chairman of the Javanese conference of Indonesian Mennonites.

He was referring to a July 17-18 gathering of representatives from the two Indonesian Mennonite conferences, or synods, together with people from Mennonite Central Committee and EMEK, the European Mennonite Mission Committee.

The two-day meeting was held in the shadow of Mount Merapi, one of Indonesia's enchanting and softly rumbling volcanoes. Fellowship was the purpose of the gathering. Singing, laughter and sharing communion highlighted the small assembly of 29 people, rather evenly divided among EMEK, MCC and the Java (GITJ) and Muria (GKMI) Mennonite synods.

One theme of the meeting focused on broadening relationships between Mennonite churches in Indonesia with those in Europe and North America. EMEK in Europe and MCC in North America have been primary links with Indonesian Mennonites for the last four decades. (Mennonite Brethren Missions and Services has related directly with the Indonesian Mennonite Mission agency PIPKA.)

The Indonesian churches, while wanting to retain close ties with MCC and EMEK, have been calling for "church-to-church" relations that would go beyond the two agencies. Dutch Mennonites have formed a more broadly based committee for relating to Indonesian churches.

At the meetings here in Kaliurang, the suggestion emerged that a similar commission for Indonesian Mennonite relations be formed in North America. The hope would be that such a commission would involve representatives of various Mennonite conferences in North America and from MCC and mission boards.

Mennonites fellowship in Indonesia, from left to right, Charles Christano and Mesach Krisetya of the Muria Mennonite Synod; Drs. Koembino and Pdt. Soedjadi of the Java Mennonite Synod; with Paul Shires and Brian Wiebe of MCC in back.

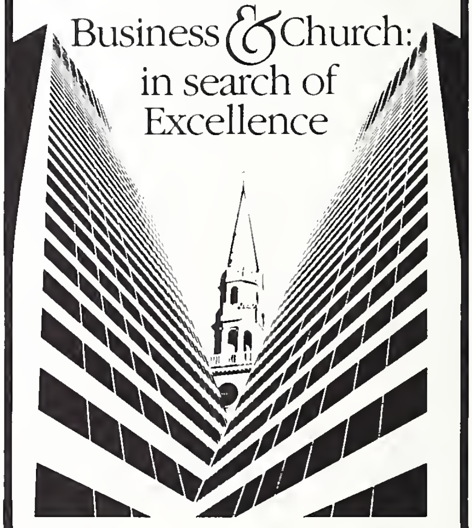
Indonesian Mennonite leaders expressed support for such broader ties, while emphasizing their hope that ties with MCC remain strong.

Identity as Anabaptist Mennonites in the respective countries also formed the focus for much discussion. Many Indonesian Mennonite churches trace roots to Dutch missionary presence dating back to the mid-19th century. During the Indonesian nationalist movement following World War II, Indonesian Mennonites felt the need to shuck off the foreign church image.

As a result, the two synods are members of the national ecumenical Indonesian Communion of Churches. Some Indonesian Mennonites said that North American Mennonites are too conscious of denomination.

The Dutch and North American participants spoke of the need for churches in their countries to be affected by the purer spirituality of the Indonesian churches. Alle Hoekema of EMEK said, "What's missing in Europe is hope. The vision that life can be better. We need aid from outside."

The Indonesian Mennonite churches, numbering approximately 70,000 in membership, continue to see strong growth. Their world view and sense of spirituality appear to many outside visitors to be closer to the New Testament context than that of the churches of the West. *Earl Martin*



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The Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Council of Moderators and Secretaries has announced an expanded consultation on the Christian Peacemaker Teams proposal Dec. 16-18 in Chicago. The proposal has been circulated widely in the church in the United States and Canada. The consultation intends to make a decision about whether or not to proceed with the CPT concept. It will also be a time to consult on implementation ideas. Copies of the proposal are available from Christian Peacemaker Teams, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501, or 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8.

Delegates to the Confederation of Evangelicals of Colombia, held in Cachipay May 22, voted to present an Anabaptist peace position proposal to the government of Colombia that would support alternative civil service legislation. The churches presenting the proposal for the national organization, which includes more than 25 evangelical groups, were the Colombian Church of the Brethren, the Brethren in Christ, the Mennonite Brethren Conference and the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Colombia.

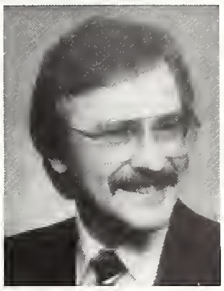
Congress '88, a National Festival of Evangelism, will be held Aug. 8-11, 1988, in the Chicago area. Don Yoder, secretary for evangelism and church planting for the Commission on Home Ministries, met with representatives from Catholic and Protestant denominations June 4 in the first pre-Congress plenary session to begin planning for the 1988 event.

RECORD

MINISTERS

Ben Rahn and *Ralph Bowman* are sharing interim pastoral duties at First Church, Reedley, Calif.

WORKERS


Bartel

Friesen

Klippenstein

Neudorf

Dean Preheim-Bartel of Elkhart, Ind., consultant for Developmental Disability Services of Mennonite Central Committee since 1979, has resigned the position effective in December.

MCC Manitoba, Winnipeg, announces the following leadership changes: *Clarence Epp*, director of the Alternative Sentencing Program, and *Ray Friesen*, director of a mediation program, are terminating their employment Aug. 31. *Paul Redekop* is succeeding Friesen as director of mediation. Friesen will continue his theological education at the University of Manitoba. Epp has not yet finalized his plans.

Craig Friesen, West Abbotsford Church, Abbotsford, B.C., has begun a one-year Serve and Learn Together (SALT) term with MCC in Kilometer 81, Paraguay, where he is an agricultural worker.

Cheri Harrer has been appointed as instructor of health, physical education and recreation effective Sept. 1 at Bluffton (Ohio) College. She will also coach women's track and serve as assistant women's basketball coach for the Beavers.

Maureen Klippenstein, Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask., has begun a one-year SALT term with MCC in Zimbabwe, where she is a secretary and teacher at Ekuphileni Bible Institute. She received a bachelor's degree in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. Her parents are Doreen and Victor Klippenstein of Swift Current.

Marlin E. and *Ruthann Miller* will spend August to December in Dublin, Ireland, as part of Marlin's year-long sabbatical from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, where he is president of Goshen Biblical Seminary. He will be writing on biblical foundations for systematic theology, and do teaching and consultation visits to the continent. Ruthann will do volunteer work in one of the few integrated Catholic and Protestant schools in the Republic of Ireland.

Allan Neudorf, Rosthern (Sask.) Church, has begun a one-year SALT term with MCC in Porto Amazona, Brazil, where he is a maintenance worker at a day-care center of AMAS, the relief and social service agency of Brazilian Mennonites. His parents are Bill and Irma Neudorf of Rosthern.

David and *Linda Peters*, Bergthaler Church, Morden, Man., have been commissioned to work at Camp Assiniboia near Winnipeg in maintenance, and as assistant cook and housekeeper.

Richard Rosenberger of Quakertown, Pa., was recently re-elected chairman of the Bluffton (Ohio) College board of trustees by a unanimous board vote. He was first elected chairman in 1974. His term will expire in 1992. Rosenberger is an Eastern District Conference representative to the college board and has been a member since 1968.

Beverly Anne Sawatzky, Bergthaler Church, Morden, Man., has been commissioned for one year of service with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in Kinshasa, Zaire. She left Aug. 6, and will be sharing duties at the hostel for missionary children there. Her parents are John and Katie Sawatzky.

Position opening

Position in developmental disabilities is open in Mennonite Mental Health Services beginning in December. Qualifications include training/experience in developmental disabilities, with skill in consultation and administration. Writing, editing and speaking are included also. Travel required. Salaried position or possible senior VS appointment.

Contact:
Gerald Shank, Personnel Services
MCC
Box M
Akron, PA 17501
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1986
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Photo by Paul Schrock

Roosters, police and refugees

Daniel Hertzler

After 16 days in Central America, I haven't learned very much. But some of what I learned is in the form of impressions which I am recording while they are still fresh. Here are a few things that impressed me about Central America.

Roosters. Every culture has its characteristic sounds. Like North America, Central America has buses, bells and car horns, but especially roosters. Even in cities we were never out of earshot of roosters. In rural areas, where people and animals live close together, roosters crowing could be a major distraction.

If they were to ask us, we would suggest that Central Americans get rid of roosters and emphasize hens as we do in North America. But some of them, I am told, defend roosters. Infertile eggs, they would say, are eggs without love. When chickens fend for themselves, as many do in Central America, roosters may well be needed. Without having studied their system more closely, I am not ready to start a campaign against roosters. Except at 2 a.m.

Police. Almost as ubiquitous as roosters in Central America are the military police. Numbers of them carry automatic rifles. I have always been careful about police, but one is particularly careful when the policeman carries an automatic rifle. One afternoon our van driver ran an amber light. A cop with a rifle signaled him, and the driver stopped promptly and took his punishment with a smile.

One of the ironies of our trip was that police were less obvious and less armed in one of the three countries we visited than in the other two. We found it interesting to observe that these other two have the name "democracies," while the third is much criticized in the United States. In one of these other two countries, not so long ago, a Mennonite leader was "detained" overnight for conducting a field trip on better farming methods. A Mennonite delegation went to see the regional commander about this. He informed them that he considers it his job to control everything that moves in that whole region.

Refugees and displaced people. We made several contacts with people in temporary institutionalized housing: displaced people and refugees. (Displaced people are within their own country; refugees have fled from their country.) We met displaced people in El Salvador and refugees in Honduras. In a sense, one of the saddest places in the world is a refugee camp. It is true that the refugees receive food, clothing and shelter of a sort. But they have lost their liberty, and what they really want is to go home.

A Salvadoran farmer

Yet many of the refugees we met did not seem depressed, particularly the Salvadoran refugees in the Mesa Grande refugee camp in northwestern Honduras. These were some of the most energetic people we met in Central America. Everybody, it seemed, was busy in Mesa Grande. They have gardens and raise 60-100 percent of their vegetables, depending on the season. We visited a carpentry shop, a sheet metal shop, a shoe-making shop and a sewing shop.

A number of refugees had learned skills they never knew before. In this sense they were better off than before they left their homes because of the war. What they most wanted, of course, was to be able to return home. But in the meantime they were redeeming the time. One of the last places I would want to live is a refugee camp. But if I did, I hope it would be like Mesa Grande. In spite of the confinement and privation, the energy and spirit of these people transformed this camp into a place of hope.

Basic needs of Central America. For many in Central America, it requires the utmost effort to obtain the basic elements to sustain life: food, water and shelter. Indeed, during our tour we spent time in four major Central American cities. In only one of them was the tap water considered safe for us to drink. In a rural area of El Salvador that we visited, running water had been made available in the mid-'70s. The system lasted about two years; then the war came and it was destroyed. Now the people carry their water again and wash clothes in the river.

One of the more poignant experiences came in a town in this area. The local Mennonite Central Committee workers took us to lunch in a downtown restaurant. It was quite a modest establishment by North American standards, but the chicken was roasted over an open wood fire and the meal was good. My enjoyment of it was tempered by the knowledge that after we finished, several small boys took over our chicken bones and made a meal from our leavings.

As a contribution toward food production, MCC makes no-interest fertilizer loans to subsistence farmers who are moving back since the fighting has lessened. Nathan Zook-Barge told us that last year 87 percent of the loans were repaid. This year, he said, although the harvest is months away, one loan has already been paid.

Numbers of people we met in Central America might be considered heroes. Among them I would include these farm families who are moving back into an area that is not secure. As Nathan put it, they are the "poorest and the bravest." As their representative, I nominate the gritty little farmer who gave us a guided tour of the area. He showed us his corn and beans, then took us down a mango-shaded road, past a row of destroyed houses to a spot he evidently considered was as far as it was safe to go. He pointed across the field and said, "Nobody goes out there." We could draw our own conclusions.

Daniel Hertzler is editor of Gospel Herald. *He represented Meetinghouse on a tour of Central America in June sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee.*

CO status for future

We have just had an opportunity to review the federal regulations issued by the Selective Service System (SSS), which sets out how it will administer a full-scale draft and mobilization for military service.

These regulations, issued in final form last April, are contrary to positions held by Mennonites since at least 1951, when the draft was reinstated after World War II.

The SSS ignored comments and suggestions from the historic peace churches and others concerned about this issue. The regulations issued by the SSS provide that

- while conscientious objector status will be granted, service for COs will be carried out under SSS control. While the SSS is an independent body, its mission is to draft and induct people into military service. In 1951 Mennonite Central Committee stated that "the program of service by conscientious objectors should be under civilian direction, the administering agency to be staffed by non-military personnel and not to be attached to the Department of Defense."

Civilian, not military, control has long been a concern. In 1935 President Roosevelt created the National Youth Administration, a jobs program that Eleanor Roosevelt supported in part because the existing Civilian Conservation Corps was "too militaristic." After all, she told her husband, ". . . it is under the supervision of the army."

- In the event of a presidential emergency declaration, processing of draft-eligible men as well as decisions regarding CO status (current registration provides no place or opportunity to indicate a request for CO status) will take place at an accelerated pace, giving those of draft age little time to formulate a request to their draft board for CO status.
- Under the current system, it is doubtful whether Mennonite church organizations or programs could qualify as employers for CO job positions. Thus overseas mission work as well as voluntary service assignments may not be available.

Our conclusion is that, in the event of an emergency and a military draft, the system that the SSS has developed is unacceptable to the long-stated positions of the historic peace churches. We therefore strongly urge that the General Conference Mennonite Church give this matter its earliest consideration. *David E. Ortman, Alayne Van Dyck, Rhoda Byler, peace and social concerns committee, Seattle Mennonite Church, 1303 N. 41st, Seattle, WA 48103*

June 30

Thanks for good articles

Really appreciated the recent article by Mark Winslow on "Healing for Modern-Day Lepers" (May 13 issue). We are happy for this positive leadership stand that is also loving and forgiving.

Loren Entz's article on "Challenges to Abou's Jesus" was tremendous. *Mary Derksen, 4 Kumi, Minami Ishigaki, Beppu Shi, Oita Ken 874 Japan*

July 17

Another look at the picture

Those who reacted so violently to the picture depicting Christ as a woman entirely missed the message of the artist—the universality of the Christ, his representation of all humanity. I too was somewhat startled by the picture but found it thought provoking, as I have found works of art depicting Christ as an American Indian, an Oriental or a black. We know that the historical Jesus was none of these, neither was he Nordic, as he is so often portrayed.

When God sent his Son into the world as the revelation of himself, he chose to send him as a babe who grew to be a man—a Palestinian Jew. Why, I do not know, nor do I care. I am glad to be reminded that regardless of whether I am male or female, I was created in the image of God. Christ offers himself to all people, regardless of status, nationality, race, color or sex. We have but to open our lives to his indwelling Presence; he alone has the power to transform us once more into his likeness. *Elva May Roth, 126 Chicago St., Morton, IL 61550*

July 20

I am disappointed in the responses of readers to the sculpture of Jesus as a woman. Our perceptions of God may differ, but how can any of us presume to *know* the nature of God?

We are all entitled to our opinions, but our God is beyond our understanding and certainly beyond our narrow quarrels. Regardless of the pronoun we ascribe, Jesus taught love and acceptance in spite of social conventions. Can we not show this love to one another in spite of our differences?

I have a question for the one who wrote, "A sculpture of Jesus with a sexy, feminine body is sheer blasphemy." Why should a feminine body be any sexier than a masculine one? Do you object as strongly to portraits of the man Jesus stripped naked and hung on a cross? Perhaps the sexiness of the sculpture lies in your own perception. *Catherine Gutwin, 61 Red River Road, Saskatoon, SK S7K 1G2*

July 20

Sorry there were so many protests about the photo of the female Christ sculpture. I appreciated a view of a transcendent Christ.

Would the protests be as strong, I wonder, with a photo of a black Christ or an Indian one? *Peggy Newcomer, 1119 N.W. 58th St., Seattle, WA 98107*

July 21

I was amazed at the negative letters (July 8 issue) concerning "that picture." When we think of male and female, we are inclined to stress the physical qualities—a tall, strong man; a beautiful, slender woman. And so when we think of God we think of him in physical terms too. But Jesus says, "God is Spirit." God is not a man; he does not have a physical body. Of course, there is danger too that we think of God as something mystical that has neither form or shape.

Nevertheless, God is Spirit but personal. And when he made us in his own image, he bestowed spiritual qualities upon us, not physical. *Marie Janzen, 217 Muse #104, Newton, KS 67114*

July 22

Calvin Redekop asks (July 8 issue) why business and professional people tend to leave the Mennonite church. I believe that the "letters" section of the same issue suggests at least a partial answer. Business and professional people learn through education and experience that asking questions, looking at options and considering alternatives (even when sometimes seemingly ridiculous) are desirable and productive activities. The overwhelmingly negative response to the Jesus-as-woman sculpture suggests that thinking about unusual ideas is not acceptable to many Mennonites. Of course Jesus was not a woman. But can't we allow ourselves the benefits of simply letting our minds play with the question "What if he had been?" and with the mind-boggling consequences this suggests?

If it is necessary to turn off their questions when going to church or reading Mennonite publications, business and professional people will most likely continue leaving. Hopefully they will be looking for other church options, not leaving altogether. *Lewis W. Sprunger, M.D., 5419 S.E. 41st Ave., Portland, OR 97202*
July 30

I was not horrified or disgusted when I read "Women Are Coming into Their Own" or when I saw the accompanying picture of Jesus as a woman.

I don't know what the artist's intention was, but what the picture said to me was that God chose his child, which could have been son or daughter, to come to earth to show us how to live and who God is. The climate of Jesus' day, of course, would not have allowed for that child to be a daughter. I trust that someday we will evolve to a point where we will truly see no male or femaleness in Christ while at the same time appreciating and acknowledging our sexual differences. *Diane Mierau Buller, Box 451, Henderson, NE 68371*
July 30

While I don't resent God described as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, thinking of God also as Mother enhances my image of God. The Sandys sculpture (May 27 issue) of Jesus as a woman adds a new dimension to my faith. For instance, it reminds me (1) that we are called to be sons *and* daughters of God, and (2) that many women have been persecuted (i.e. crucified) throughout history. *Helen R. Tieszen, Route 1, Box 150, Marion, SD 57043*
Aug. 1

Candor and power

Thank you for the absolute candor, wisdom and spiritual insight so evident in the editorial "Pornography, Violence and Lust" (June 24 issue). I agree fully that the solution to this societal problem is more likely to come with confession than with legislation.

Your maturity and humility as an editor has been deeply appreciated. The following issue (July 8) immediately provides further illustration of your willingness to confess. I appreciate the bold printed apology (p. 309) regarding a picture of Edwina Sandys' sculpture of Jesus as a woman (May 27 issue). I too was upset by the picture. I am moved by the apology.

The apostle Paul states in 2 Corinthians 12:9, "My power is made perfect in weakness." *The Mennonite* is indeed a powerful communicator. Thank you for the humble leadership that has helped it to become the inspiring magazine it now is. *Jake C. Froese, pastor, Faith Mennonite Church, 10163 - 117 St., Edmonton, AB T5K 1X5*
July 22

Pornography and illegitimacy

You have done it again. What a beautifully succinct editorial on pornography, violence and lust (June 24 issue). As you have done in the past, e.g. on issues pertaining to peace and abortion, you have put your finger right on the problem.

I am writing to share a nagging perception about another issue which I've not yet seen discussed in print. I am concerned about the apparent target of most accusations regarding the births of babies to single women, mostly teenagers. As a community health nurse, the most frequent accusation I hear is, "They just want a free ride via the welfare department." As someone who sees many of these women pre- and postnatally in their environment, I'm convinced that it is not anywhere near the primary reason for their pregnancy or numerous children. I believe the major responsibility for the problem lies with the men.

When we examine the source of self-esteem available to the men who are the fathers of the babies born to single women on the welfare roles, one of the few acceptable sources available to them is that of making babies. Most of them are without regular employment. They are unable to live at home and carry out their roles as fathers for fear of being reported to the case worker by the neighbors. Denied the opportunity to enjoy the responsibility of taking care of their own progeny—a basic animal instinct—the father tries to deny his being with alcohol, other drugs or other deviant behavior.

Having spent most of the day in flop houses in order to get at least enough to eat but with no source of acceptance, let alone support, they turn up at the home of the mother of one of their children, under cover of night. Having been home all day with no money for baby-sitters and little diversion aside from the television, she welcomes the attention he gives her. And with little to curb the natural instincts, the cycle begins again.

And who is to blame? Is it God for creating us with the urge to procreate and nourish our young? Or is it society, which shapes our culture and environment. And who shapes society? Who writes the laws and governs their enactment?

As you suggest in the editorial mentioned above, repentance would be a good beginning. *Erica Janzen, 3920 Deer Trail, Evansville, IN 47715*
July 27

About letters: *To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues, we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. All correspondence to* The Mennonite *should be addressed to Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Our Winnipeg office has been closed.* Editor

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October 22-30—The Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church is sponsoring a tour of the scenic Southwest, including a visit to the Navajo and Hopi Mennonite communities. Arrangements have been made with Prudent Tours for transportation on modern motorcoach with restroom and air conditioning. Tour includes housing in good motels, admissions to scenic attractions, baggage handling, and the services of tour guide Pearl Janzen.

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Commission on Home Ministries
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Phone (316) 283-5100.

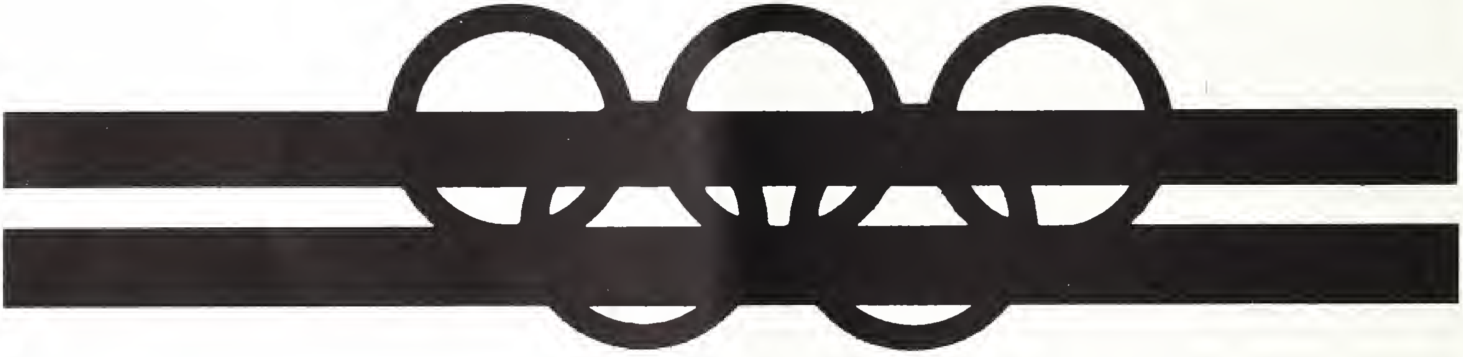
Friendliness is winsome

Ken Peterson

Church growth is like the Los Angeles Olympics symbol. It takes mutual friendships to win a variety of people.

The Olympics symbol is five interlinked rings representing the five continents. It is a symbol of universal friendliness. This spirit of friendship that transcends and links the nations of the world was warmly illustrated at the opening ceremonies of the 23rd Olympiad at the Los Angeles Coliseum, July 28, 1984. One of the young people from our former church at Upland, Calif., Minka van der Zwaag, marched in the band.

The fanfare included the releasing of balloons from the field with banners proclaiming "Welcome" to the 140 nations, each in a different language. Under the seats of the 92,000 spectators was a colored placard. At a given signal, all were raised. They formed the flags of the 140 nations represented. Over 7,000 participated in the march of the athletes. The first country to march onto the field was Greece (since the Games originated there nearly 1000 B.C.), then the athletes of each of the nations in alphabetical order, with the United States marching last as the host. All nations received a warm reception of applause from the audience, and some waved more than one flag.



The Los Angeles Olympics symbol reflects the need we have for one another even as we travel different paths in life.

Through sports an important step was taken toward peace and understanding. Vicki McClure led the universal multitude in a song, "Reach out and touch somebody's hand. Make this world a better place. . . ." People joined hands spontaneously. People from many nations were holding hands in friendship. It is my belief that this peaceful demonstration of universal friendliness made the heart of God glad.

Friendship is winsome. When God wanted to win the world to himself, he came as a friend in Jesus Christ. Jesus said to his followers, "I have called you friends" (John 15:15). Jesus demonstrated a new approach to people. He showed us that God wishes to touch us with his own friendship. He showed us that he wants us to touch others with our friendship.

The church is mainly called to help people become friends of God and friends of one another. Proverbs 18:24 says, "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly. . . ." Nothing wins like friendship. A friendly church has one of the most important elements necessary for growth. People want to know that church is a place where they can make friends and be befriended.

That is tremendous good news for Mennonites. For it has been my observation that Mennonites have a special gift at being genuine friends. I visited a Mennonite church about 17 years ago for the first time. Its way of worship and system of beliefs became more and more important. But a vital drawing card at the Alberta Community Mennonite Church in Portland, Ore., and the other Mennonite churches in Oregon we fellowshiped with was their loving acceptance of me. Their faith was expressed in friendliness. They did not try to force me to think their way. They did not have a long list of things for me to accept before they would accept me.

A look at our Pacific District Conference reveals many examples of winning new people to our churches through friendship. At Aurora, Ore., the church grew over the years mainly through its friendliness. Paso Robles has had a number of new people come recently through the friendliness of the people there.

Even the name of the church in Chandler, Ariz., "Koinonia," means "fellowship." Both its first pastor, Don Yoder, and its present pastor, Calvin King, seem to have a special way with people. John Melendrez at Santa Fe Springs, Calif., is an outgoing person with a friendly group of people who have regular fellowship meals together. Adam Liu in Santa Clara, Calif., acts as a sacrificial friend to the many he reaches out to. In Upland, Calif., people stayed because of our friendliness. We went out of our way to show an interest in people who showed an interest in our church. During morning worship we added "hands of fellowship" so that people would feel our welcome. We had smorgasbords, dinners out, volleyball parties and game nights to build relationships. Our prayer chain was often used for needs of people in our church and in our community.

The friendly church is a winning church. What does your church do to show a spirit of friendliness to people in the community?

Ken Peterson is the pastor at Calvary Mennonite Church, 6711 S. Lone Elder Road, Aurora, OR 97009.

Khadafy and 'be transformed'

Philip Bender

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. . . . Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them" (Romans 12:2,14).

One day before the U.S. bombing of targets in Libya, someone in a Sunday school class I was teaching said, "If President Reagan says that Khadafy is a mad dog, he must be right." Romans 12:2,14 was our lesson text.

That remark prompted me to ask whether Paul's teaching on non-conformity—a concept treasured by our Mennonite tradition—might help us think about such pressing problems as international terrorism and the man we are told is Public Enemy No. 1—Colonel Moammar Khadafy of Libya.

First, note where non-conformity for Paul is rooted—in the *mind.* At the heart of one's life-sacrifice to God, Paul says, is a non-conformed, transformed mind.

Next, observe how Paul illustrates this new mind. It shows up in how we think about our enemies. Flowing from a renewed mind is a non-conformist perception of enemies—a transformed way of relating to them.

Bearing these points in mind, I discovered five perspectives in Romans that seem relevant in informing how we Christians may think about Colonel Khadafy and the U.S. response to him.

First, *Paul's words in Romans 12 imply that the enemy is a person who deserves to be respected as such.* He urges his readers to acknowledge their enemy's humanity: "If hungry, feed him; if thirsty, give him drink" (v. 20).

The worldly mind does not ascribe much humanity to its enemies. Its approach is to caricature and dehumanize. Labels replace people. Khadafy becomes an animal—a dog. Russians are "commies." Vietnamese are "chinks."

But in the non-conformed mind, enemies have human faces. They are people with dignity and worth—as much as one's own kind—because they, too, have been created by a God who loves them.

Second, *to see one's enemies as a person implies that he or she, despite deplorable actions, may have a point of view that deserves a hearing.* Many observers of the Middle East are convinced that terrorism is far more complex than violent fanatics preying on innocent people.

What does it mean to see our "enemies" from a "transformed" view?

The conformed, worldly mind oversimplifies complex problems and does not hear well the life situation from which its enemies come.

But the transformed mind, while decrying actions contrary to God's will for all people—such as killing—seeks to understand its adversary's point of view and to discover solutions that deal with root causes.

Third, *the Christ-renewed mind understands that all, yes, all—including all nations—have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*

For the worldly mind, things are more black and white. There are angels and devils, good guys and bad guys, powers of light and darkness. Russia is glibly cited as the "focus of evil in the modern world." Colonel Khadafy becomes a prince of evil, needing to be brought to heel by the righteous Americans. Likewise, Middle East terrorists might see themselves as embodying the good against the evil West.

But the non-worldly mind is much more cautious in making such easy distinctions. While ready to speak out against evil, it also checks for the log in its own eye, for it knows that sin is the tie that binds us all.

This perspective from the heart of Paul's teaching leads to a fourth: *Self-righteousness is a particularly dangerous and subtle sin.* Earlier in Romans Paul has harsh words for those who denounce obvious sins in others, then turn around and do the same: "You who pass judgment on the guilty are committing the same crimes yourself. . . . You proclaim, 'Do not steal,' but are you yourself a thief?" (2:1, 21 *NEB*).

Conformed, worldly minds which condemn violence in others easily rationalize their own. Washington's bombing of targets in populated Libyan cities becomes a "surgical strike" and a "self-defense," while the 100-plus civilians killed indiscriminately are "collateral damage." Meanwhile, "contras" in Nicaragua, whose terrorism against civilians is as gruesome as bombs in airplanes (though less of a media event), are underwritten financially and dignified as "freedom fighters." Terrorists against Western interests also employ such double standards.

Paul suggests that a non-conformed, transformed mind will approach all human conflict with a readiness to admit and change its own ungodly behavior.

Fifth, *the one renewed in Christ knows that he or she used to be an "enemy."* That's the word Paul uses: "For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his son. . ." (5:10).

How has God dealt with us, his former enemies? Not by retaliatory bombing, not by inflicting our just due, but by giving his Son to suffer and die for our rebellion.

Paul's words in Romans do not address all the issues raised by international terrorism and how governments may deal with it. But they do provide an approach for us Christians to think about these issues.

Philip Bender, Box 120, Altona, MB R0G 0B0, is on the staff of Elim Bible Institute.

books

Parenting sojourn

And Then There Were Three *by Sara Wenger Shenk (Herald Press, 1985, 212 pages)*

Reviewed by Jeanne Houser, 417 W. 11th, Newton, KS 67114

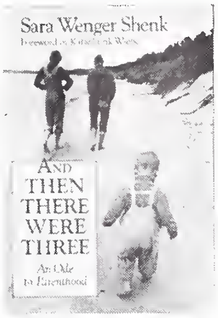
I would like to live down the street from Sara Wenger Shenk. Her book is a rare jewel, a unique blend of personal sharing, theological perspective, biblical feminism, practical wisdom and joyful anecdotes. She is honest in recounting her sojourn into marriage and parenthood, recalling feelings and issues that are easily identifiable and quickly shatter the age-old myth of the perfect wife and mother.

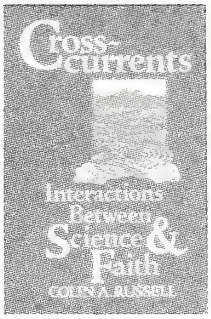
While the first half of the book traces Shenk's own history, and the second deals with specific issues like tolerance, interdependence, solidarity and empathy, the whole manuscript is alive with the author's struggles and joys. The book is filled with apt metaphors, research, quotations of poetry and prose and biblical references. The themes are so deftly woven that profound insights occur frequently, gently challenging and affirming the reader.

Shenk's life and writing is based on the conviction that "women and men are equal partners in life." Both the traditional headship/submission model and the current egalitarian/contractual model of marriage are deficient, leaving Shenk to conclude that mutual servanthood in Christ is the most freeing model for marriage.

The author faces squarely societal and so-called Christian assumptions about parenting, noting that there is no single way to serve God, parents are not more important than others in the church and that parenting isn't all of who a person is. She is also clear that parenting is one of the most demanding, intense, worthy and profound experiences in life. She calls for a more complete liberation in society so that both men and women have options for employment, for using their gifts and for being involved with their children. She challenges national priorities of spending that leave children's basic needs unmet. Having children has led Shenk to confront the global issues of war and poverty anew because her own children have brought a deeper vulnerability and solidarity.

Shenk weaves all of this together articulately, compassionately and humorously to offer hope, wisdom and joy. Few books on parenting offer the spiritual maturity of this one. I can't think of a better way to travel myself.





Christianity and science

Cross-currents: Interactions between Science and Faith, *by Colin A. Russell (Eerdmans, 1985, 272 pages)*

Reviewed by Ronald Rich, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817-1112

The author is a committed Christian and a historian of science at England's Open University. He "does not envisage the historic relations between [Western] science and religion [primarily] in terms of conflict . . . but in seeing a continuity between [them]." Western belief in laws in nature comes from belief in a powerful lawgiver. The Bible supports testing God's surprising truth and therefore experimenting with our hands, not relying only on human theorizing, as in other cultures, for the glory of God and the benefit of humankind.

Russell treats objectively and fairly the problems that geology and evolution posed for Genesis. The contributions of Quakers and other nonconformists are included.

The author reviews the fantastic modern picture of empty atoms, particles of light, electron waves, relativity, the uncertainty principle, and noncausality; likewise Einstein's deism, 20th-century secularism and the Christianity of numerous scientists. Biblical theism easily accommodates the physicists' non-causality and the heat death of the universe. Relativity doesn't apply to ethics. The complementarity of physics (waves and particles) harmonizes with those of mechanism and organism, free will and determinism, the divine and human natures of Christ, and science and religion. Science doesn't prove religion, yet it now sweeps away the obstacle of Victorian naturalism.

John Habgood is quoted: ". . . theologians want to find a position which is secure against any possible advances in scientific knowledge." I think this explains their insistence that even the astronomical finding of a definite creation time for the universe mustn't be construed as pointing to a Creator.

Public profession

Stand Up and Be Counted by *R. T. Kendall (Zondervan, 1984, 127 pages)*

Reviewed by John W. Voth, pastor at New Hopedale Mennonite Church, Meno, OK 73760

Are altar calls out of date? The purpose of this book is to promote the practice of calling for a public profession of faith. The author is pastor at Westminster Chapel in England. He has training in the Nazarene Church and has adopted what he calls a "mild Calvinism" as his theology.

Much of the book deals with defending the practice of calling for a public profession, which the author prefers calling a public pledge. He does a good job of promoting it for churches with large congregations in services that are led by strong pulpit ministries where new people are coming to the services regularly. But the book would not relate nearly as well to small congregations with the same worshipers regularly or house churches.

One of the best sections of this book is the chapter on the history of the altar call, which discusses both strengths and weaknesses of the "mourners bench" and the "anxious seat." It seems to me that the history of the public profession indicates that creative new methods need to be formed for each new generation to meet its needs in making a public profession.

Another good section of the book is the author's sharing of how he practices the public pledge. He uses the Evangelism Explosion presentation of the content of the gospel and then has tactful ways of inviting people to make their profession in Christ public.

The book impressed me as a pastor that people need ways to come out in the open with the confession of their faith in Christ. They need to stand up and be counted.

MEDITATION

Mud pies

After a summer rain, my 2-year-old son, in his fresh clothes, scampers to play outside. I watch him descend the front steps, toddle along the sidewalk and stop, fascinated by a puddle. He hesitates along the edge for a second, then steps in, stamping his little feet, delighted with the splashes. Then he stoops down and swirls the water with his fingers. Soon he is seated, scooping up mud in his little hands, examining it, squishing it into a "pie," then letting it plop back into the water. When I arrive and haul him forth, he looks at his hands in surprise, seeming to say, "Where did all that dirt come from?" and furtively tries to wipe them on his shirt.

In his simplicity my son teaches me spiritual truths. When Jesus saved me he washed me clean with his blood, clothed me in his righteousness and established me upon the Rock. Yet, like my son, I too am attracted to puddles. "Let me go, Lord," I say. "I just want to have a little fun." He watches me go to the puddle, stand tempted on its edge, then reach out to dabble. When he arrives, he startles me. I look at my hands and at my robe. I am ashamed. How could they so easily become spotted with sin?

Priscilla Miller

In memory of John

Keep coming
We keep coming
We keep coming to Golgotha,
where they're putting up the crosses
for our friends.

He was almost the same age,
Jesus,
as you,
when he died.

We don't have crosses anymore,
don't believe in them.
We've got isolation cells though,
and you can make your own cross there
with shirt or pant leg
in a womb of steel.

Do you still take thieves
into your kingdom?

He's got stuff inside him
that he wouldn't trust with anyone.
He's got years of hatred to be uncoiled.

Do you have the time
Jesus?

We keep coming to Golgotha,
where they're putting up the
crosses
for our friends.

Harry Nigh

CONTENTS

As the summer season slips quickly by again, our thoughts turn to a fresh year of church activities. In this issue we present a series of inspirational materials to encourage churches in a vital and dynamic ministry for our day. We pray that you too will experience new and exciting anticipation as the summer break gives way to a flurry of activities in your congregation.

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THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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editorial

Compassion did come central

When I went to register for the Saskatoon '86 GC triennial sessions July 21-27, I could tell they expected tough times. The first things they passed me were three medical release forms to sign. I repeated my name. "Yes," they told me, "this is for you."

Now I started to worry. Did they know something about my health I did not know?

It turned out they had confused me with my friend Bernie Wiebe, a medical doctor from Rosetown, Sask.

That was good preparation for the triennial conference. My senses were now alert and brain cells in motion.

Monday night's opening was normal. President Tilitzky's imaginative dialogue with a "voice from on high" impressed me.

The delegates rolled casually through Tuesday morning. Come Tuesday afternoon, they showed what they were after.

The human sexuality report ended with a look at the General Board's resolution. It calls us to affirm our sexuality as a gift from God, to confess that we have been too silent on this topic and to covenant ourselves to an ongoing search for biblical insight in this matter. In the meantime, it declares premarital, extramarital and homosexual practice as sin.

When the floor was opened to discussion, 18 people addressed the resolution. Among them were three who identified themselves as homosexual and pleaded that our conference be a body of compassion.

There was support and there was challenge.

Their pastors said these people have been "significant gifts" in the churches. Some had been church workers and leaders for years without anybody knowing they were gay. Now that they had declared their situation, should that mean a rejection of those gifts?

Some expressed dismay and shock. One pastor said that healing is available to all people who seek it. He urged homosexuals to acknowledge this and he urged the conference to "look for a healing response." Another delegate said the total sexuality dilemma was due to our failure to "turn our eyes to Jesus."

One person spoke of being heterosexual but hurting due to her spouse's infidelity. (No one seemed ready to leave the main topic and respond to her.)

Now it went to small groups to discuss whether a resolution was needed. If so, what for?

Immediately following, 43 group representatives gave brief responses. The majority seemed unready for the resolution.

Time was gone and continuation was set for Thursday afternoon, during what was scheduled as "free time."

Thursday tours, golf appointments, swimming, etc. were canceled and attendance was again full. The resolution was presented as a motion. In rapid succession 30 people addressed the floor. The tone sounded more favorable to the resolution than it had on Tuesday. Then an amendment was proposed. This was so substantial that the chair ruled it a substitute motion. Time ran out and this motion was referred to Friday afternoon. (In the meantime, the proposed amendment was withdrawn.)

On Friday, 27 people spoke to the motion before the vote. Opinions again ranged over the spectrum. There was no clear consensus. Another amendment and a motion to table were defeated.

Now it became clear that people wanted a vote. And slowly one could feel the atmosphere coalescing around the original motion.

A ballot vote took time to count. There was little doubt now of the outcome. But another nine speakers addressed the floor. No one was gloating. Pain was written on their faces. They called all GC members to continue seeking God's will for and to care for all people. Compassion took the center stage.

I was weeping as the vote was being counted. My soul ached to show Christ's caring compassion to all hurting people. The tone of these post-vote speakers helped me. Yes, we are all sinners, saved only by God's "amazing grace." His compassion is our only hope.

My delegate vote supported the resolution—together with 1,556 others. I pray that we voted with compassion. *Bernie Wiebe*

All correspondence to The Mennonite *should now be addressed to* Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

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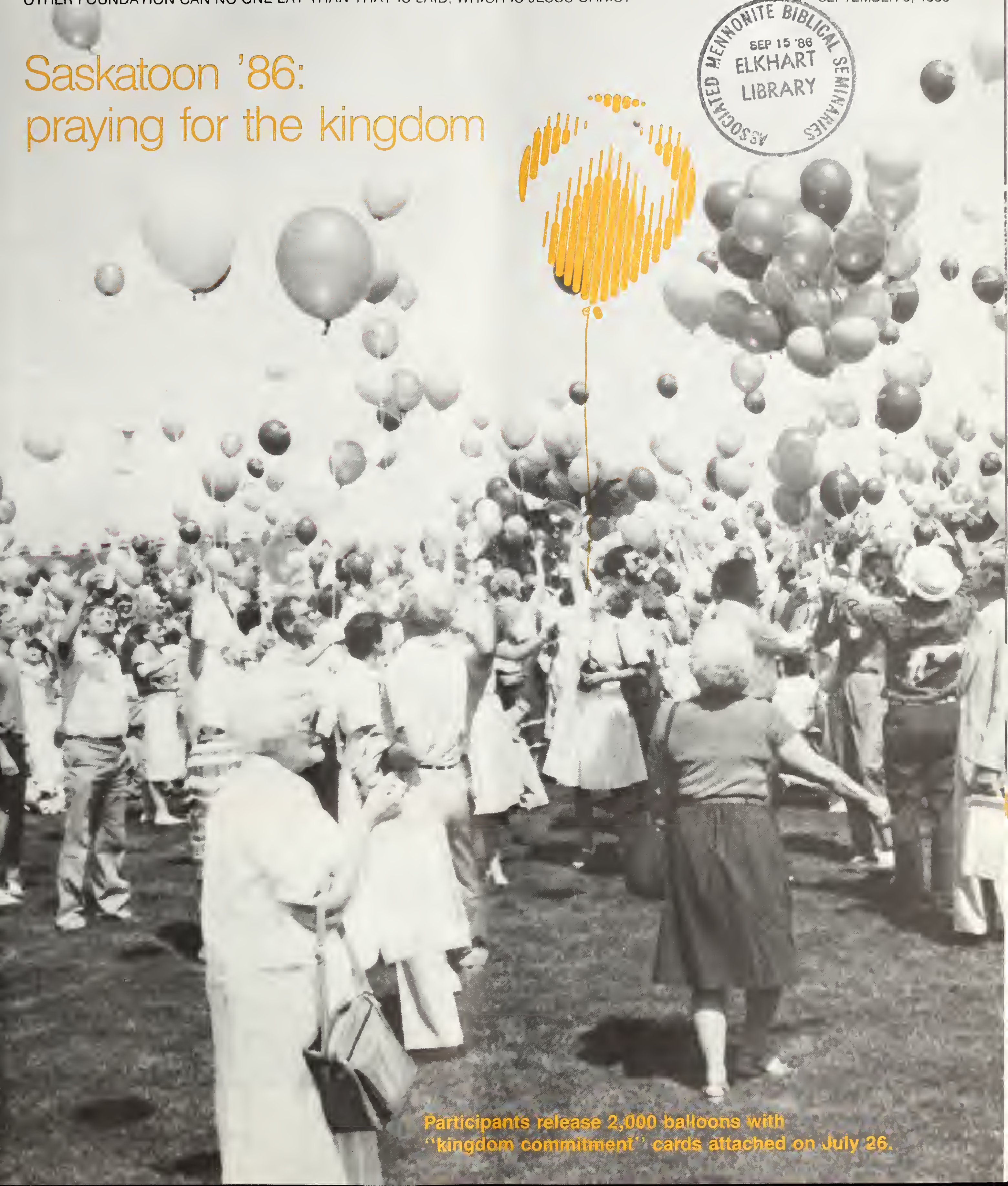
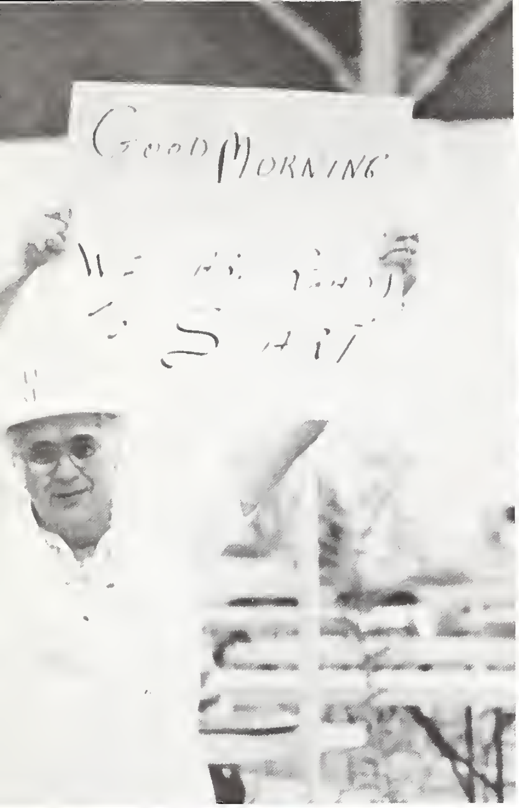
Saskatoon '86: praying for the kingdom



Participants release 2,000 balloons with "kingdom commitment" cards attached on July 26.



Marilyn Houser Hamm leads a song on the piano.

John Poettcker leads singing.

This little girl joins her mother in the CMBC alumni choir.

A diverse people of one kingdom

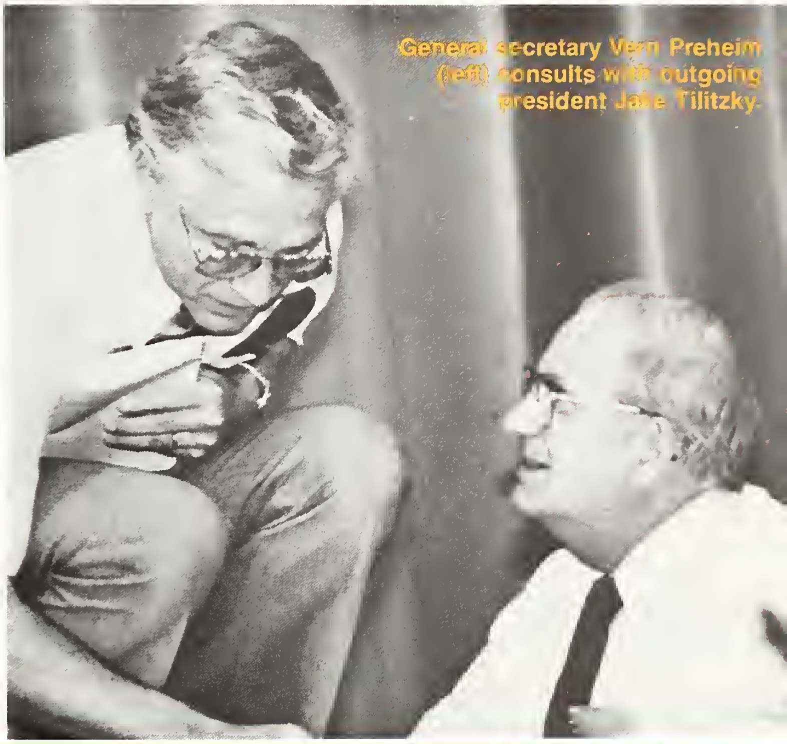
Gordon Houser

It had been 48 years since Saskatoon had hosted a General Conference. One of the news items from that 1938 conference was that many participants contracted food poisoning. As if to make up for that inconvenience, the hosts of Saskatoon '86, coordinated by Delmer and Elsie Epp, provided ample facilities, cheerful service and, as far as I know, safe food. An added bonus was beautiful weather, which appeared between a rainy week before the conference and rain on the final day.

The hosts bade welcome to a diverse

Children paint pictures as part of the COE report.

Ron Sider gives the Schowalter Memorial Address.


General secretary Vern Preheim (left) consults with outgoing president Jake Tilitzky.

people—diverse in beliefs as well as ethnic backgrounds—who came to pray the conference theme, "Thy Kingdom Come." This diversity displayed itself throughout the week. A diversity of ages was reflected in the programs for children—both a nursery and for ages 4-13—for youth and for adults, a few of whom had attended that 1938 conference. The 26 churches that joined the General Conference in Saskatoon were rural and urban, and they included Chinese and Hispanic congregations. Speakers at the podium or on the floor included natives, Hispanics, Chinese, blacks, women and men. During discussions on sexuality, leadership and a development plan, a diversity of opinions became evident.

Nevertheless, a common thread of desire wove itself through the sessions. In his address to the opening session, president Jake Tilitzky prayed to God, "Come to the Kremlin, to the Middle East, to South Africa, to Latin America, to the Pentagon before humankind is obliterated by a nuclear holocaust." A voice representing God's responded, "Repent, humble yourself, become like little children, learn of my meekness and humility, be born of the Spirit."

The kingdom cannot be built, Tilitzky went on. It can only come. "Human strength and activism are not enough. We need to die to ourselves and be reborn into the kingdom."

This thread of longing for the kingdom expressed itself more concretely in prayers, in the fervent singing that marks each conference and in the "kingdom commitments" made on Saturday morning, culminating in a

entennial Players perform
odern Reasons," one of
veral dramas.

New technology was a visible part of the sessions.

uriel Stackley, new editor of *The*
ennonite, captures herself and a
omful of balloons.

Bev Suderman moderates Canada night

balloon launch (see cover). More oblique was the thread of pain that ran through the sexuality discussion, the longing for loving agreement that never came, though a kind of loving disagreement seemed to emerge.

Meals were times for informal sharing when a family atmosphere pervaded the cavernous Field House. It was here that one most heard laughter, that blessed medicine.

Laughter was also heard on Friday evening during "Canada night," when Canadians poked fun at themselves as well as at Americans. Getting people to laugh at themselves was perhaps the most ingenious—and most prophetic—trick of the conference. When Ron McDonald tried to illustrate the metric system on a yard-long (no, meter-long) piece of paper, his antics became a parable for how easily we preach to others what we have trouble doing ourselves.

The diversity of General Conference Mennonites was displayed more than any previous conference at the podium and on the conference floor. More women and young adults came to the mike than before. High school youth

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

The weather was fine, though it
ained Sunday morning.

Children had their own activities.

All the meetings and activities left many exhausted.

even held their own discussion on sexuality and presented their conclusion to the conference body. The presence of youth at plenary discussions and Hubert Brown's stirring speech indicated that many youth are eager to become involved in the ministry of the church.

This diversity seemed welcome, and the unanimous passage of a "Many Peoples Becoming God's People" resolution affirmed its goodness. Yet some people expressed dismay at the present lack of diversity. There was a glaring absence of black faces. One person noted that only one of the nominees for boards or commissions was under age 30, and he wasn't elected.

The presence and speeches of gays was alarming to some, but the tenor of acceptance was clearly more pronounced than at previous conferences.

A symbol that fits nicely with the idea of a common thread expressing diversity is the quilt. Women in Mission, in its first-ever report to the General Conference, employed this symbol effectively in displaying a beautiful quilt and using its patterns to tell the WM story. The Development Plan reports also used quilt patterns to show colorfully the mission of the General Conference expressed in its four goals: to evangelize, to teach and practice biblical principles, to develop and train leadership and to seek to achieve Christian unity.

Perhaps the influence of Canada's multiculturalism was felt by participants. From July 21-27 Saskatoon hosted a diverse people who came to pray for the coming of the one kingdom of God. •

Thy kingdom come

Jacob W. Elias

On five mornings, Tuesday-Saturday, July 22-26, the Saskatoon '86 sessions opened with Bible studies on the theme "Thy Kingdom Come." Following are some excerpts from those studies.

Catching the vision (Acts 1:1-14). The vision of God's kingdom was hard for even the inner circle of Jesus' disciples to grasp. Their difficulty is understandable. There were several conflicting views of the kingdom of God afloat in their day. Sadducean priests visualized the kingdom in terms of running the religious machinery and maintaining a working compromise with Rome. Zealots felt the kingdom would come only if they could militarily give the Romans the boot. Pharisees held that the kingdom of God consisted of personal obedience to God's program of law and order. Essenes considered it necessary to withdraw as a faithful remnant to wait for the coming of the kingdom, which would vindicate them as the only ones who made it in. Readers of apocalyptic paperbacks were persuaded that even though things looked bleak, God would intervene directly to destroy the earthly kingdom and establish a heavenly kingdom.

The disciples asked, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

Jesus' reply was an appeal and a promise. It was an appeal for the revision of their expectations concerning the kingdom of God. And it was a promise of power to witness to and live in harmony with the new vision.

The disciples looked to the risen Jesus and asked, "Will you. . . ?" Jesus responded by pointing to God the Father. "God has authoritatively fixed the times and seasons" (Acts 1:7).

The disciples asked, "Will you at this time. . . ? The powerful kingdom of justice and peace did not come when you entered the city of Jerusalem as the Messiah. Will you do it now?" Jesus replied, "The times and the seasons are fixed by God. . . ." In other words, Don't bother trying to determine God's calendar.

They also asked, "Will you now restore the kingdom?" Jesus responded by talking about their witness concerning the kingdom, a witness empowered by the Holy Spirit of God. "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

But the brunt of their question is in the last two words: "Will you at this time restore the kingdom *to Israel*?" The disciples were asking, Lord, will you finally do it *for us*? Will you finally restore the kingdom *to our people*? To this view of the kingdom as a national entity to be restored to one nation—Israel—Jesus replied, "Not just Israel. What God has done and is doing and will do affects Jerusalem and Judea to be sure, but also Samaria and all nations to the end of the earth, to the close of the age."

Becoming kingdom people (Acts 2:14-47). When God breaks into history, human categories of understanding are shattered. People who had gathered for the Pentecost festival heard the commotion and listened to the proclamation. Some asked in astonished bewilderment, "What is this? What does this mean?" Others dismissed it cynically, saying "These people are drunk."

The one who rose to the occasion was Peter. Standing with the 11 apostles, Peter responded both to the scoffers and to those genuinely curious regarding the meaning of the event they were witnessing. Peter quoted from Joel about the work of the Holy Spirit among all people. He reviewed the story of Jesus' ministry, death, resurrection and ascension. Then Peter responded to the further question, "What shall we do?" Peter exhorted the people, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40).

True repentance not only leads to the forgiveness of sins and restored fellowship with God, who graciously bestows the gift of the Holy Spirit. It also leads to a new social reality, a reality that is visible. It leads to creation of a community of believers whose life together reflects the vision of the kingdom.

Luke tells us that those people baptized into the new community of kingdom people were "attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, partaking of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:46-47). People are liberated from their selfishness when they meet Jesus and receive the Spirit. The believers who repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins were guided by the Spirit to sell their possessions, as needed, so that distribution could be made.

Opening the doors (Acts 10:30-48). Huddled together in Jerusalem in their homes to eat fellowship meals or to hear the apostles' teaching or gathered at the temple for their regular periods of prayer, the earliest believers in Jesus as the Messiah seemed a close-knit, unified group. Luke says they were of "one heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32).

Our text is part of an extended section (10:1—11:18) in which Peter is shown finally reaching the conclusion that God is larger than his preconceived notions of who was in and who was not in the kingdom community.

Peter should have known better. He had spent several years with Jesus, who taught constantly about the kingdom of God. Secondly, the fact that God's gracious concern encompassed not just Jews but potentially all the people on the earth was clearly taught in his Bible.

Despite their many opportunities to hear from Jesus the parables and stories about the nature of the kingdom of God, Peter and the other disciples still had a narrow conception of the kingdom as limited to themselves, the kingdom restricted to their own people.

That Peter was beginning to sense his view of the people of God was too narrow is suggested in that he stayed in Joppa with a tanner. In Orthodox Jewish circles that was a no-no, for tanners were ritually unclean. Even so, it took a vision and a divinely coordinated meeting with the God-fearing gentile Cornelius to lead Peter to his "ah-ha" conclusion: "I am beginning to see that God shows no partiality. God is not a partisan God, who arbitrarily prefers one nation or tribe or race to another. Among every people, in every nation, those who fear God and do righteousness are acceptable to God" (10:34-35).

Given that Peter's upbringing had underlined the importance of avoiding the uncleanness of close association with gentiles, this was a major breakthrough.

Testing the spirits (Acts 20:17-38). When a community of faith keeps to itself it can often hold the line in doctrinal positions or beliefs. Such a community can normally also maintain discipline among its members, sometimes in rather strict or even harsh ways.

But what happens when the doors are opened?

Acts 20:17-38 is the farewell speech of Paul at Miletus to the elders of the church at Ephesus. It is obvious from this address that Paul—in concluding his ministry toward the church at Ephesus—was concerned about dangers to that church, dangers from within and dangers from outside.

Practice of the magical arts was prevalent in Ephesus. Many believers who had been practitioners of magic in order to dispel evil spirits came confessing and divulging their practices (Acts 19:18). A huge bonfire followed. Paperbacks dealing with magic and the occult totaling a value of 50,000 pieces of silver were destroyed. (One piece of silver was a day's wage.)

Another phenomenon in Ephesus was the cult of Artemis—goddess of the Ephesians. When the craftsmen who made silver shrines to Artemis feared the loss of their livelihood, they aroused public opinion against the church and specifically against Paul. A riot broke out and almost threatened loss of control.

From the outside, Paul warned, would come fierce wolves. From within their congregation would arise people speaking perverse things, seeking to seduce others into their way of thinking and behaving. As shepherds and guardians of the flock in their custody, the elders were urged to take heed for themselves lest they fall victim to the wolves from outside or be seduced by smooth talkers from within their congregations. And Paul admonished them to feed the church, which God had purchased with the blood of Jesus, and to keep them on the alert.

There are many voices striving to be heard. The spirits need to be discerned whether or not they are truly of God.

Len Siemens introduced each morning's Bible study from Acts by portraying Luke writing to Theophilus.

When churches are upset by the wolves from outside and the smooth talking seducers from within, let us remember this way of testing the spirits. Do they demonstrate the self-giving spirit of Jesus? Or do they seek power and prestige and prominence for themselves, their institutions or their nation?

Living and serving in hope (Acts 28:14-31). Luke emphasizes in Acts that Christian service is often against the stream of the prevailing religious, political or cultural ideology. In Lystra, after Paul had been stoned and left for dead, he visited a number of churches, strengthening the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith and saying that "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). What was necessary for Jesus in obedience to God is also at least in some parallel fashion necessary for the followers of Jesus.

How can people then—serving in the name of Christ in difficult circumstances—continue living and serving in hope?

Before King Agrippa and Queen Bernice, Paul testified, "I stand here on trial for hope in the promise God made to our ancestors, to which our 12 tribes hope to attain. Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?" (Acts 26:68).

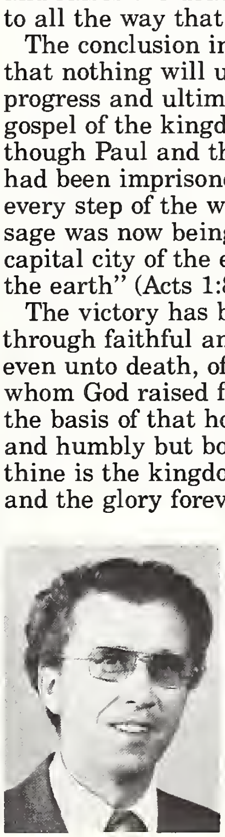
Finally in Rome Paul met with the leaders of the Jewish community and stated his case (28:20): ". . . it is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain."

"I am not on trial for anything I have done. I am on trial for what God has done in raising Jesus from the dead. I am on trial for hope."

We live today in a perilous world. But there is hope. It is the hope of Israel, indeed the hope of all peoples. It is hope in the God who frees slaves and raises the dead. God still extends to all the way that leads to life.

The conclusion in Acts reminds us that nothing will ultimately stop the progress and ultimate victory of the gospel of the kingdom of God. Even though Paul and the other apostles had been imprisoned and maltreated every step of the way, the gospel message was now being preached in the capital city of the empire, "the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The victory has been gained in and through faithful and obedient service, even unto death, of Jesus Christ, whom God raised from the dead. On the basis of that hope we can serve and humbly but boldly confess, "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."


Jacob W. Elias serves as dean at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IL 46517.

Youth called to be kingdom people

Susan E. Janzen

Ask any of the more than 500 youth who attended the triennial sessions in Saskatoon for the highlight of the conference and you are likely to get 500 different responses. Planners took into account a wide variety of interests and expectations during the week-long event.

Dynamic speakers, daily workshops and seminar options, small-group meetings, recreation and late-night activities kept the youth busy, but there always seemed to be time for a quick trip to a nearby mall or to the game room in the student union or simply to spend time with friends.

Each morning began with a worship service focusing on the conference theme, "Thy Kingdom Come." Music, drama and input from speakers were all a part of the worship times.

Marilyn Houser Hamm of Altona, Man., at the piano and Doug and Jude Krehbiel of North Newton, Kan., on guitar and vocals led the group in spirited singing.

Using the series of "Horton" books by Dr. Seuss, a readers' theater group from Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College set the stage for each day's worship with their drama presentations.

Pinch-hitting for Hubert Brown (who missed his plane and his luggage) on Tuesday morning, Peter Ediger of Arvada, Colo., director of Mennonite Voluntary Service, talked about the two most important people in life—oneself and Jesus. "The more we learn about Jesus, the more we learn about ourselves; and the more we learn about our true selves, the more we learn about Jesus," was Ediger's comment.

He told the group that no life is more boring than a life without Jesus. "He asks the most crazy, stimulating and challenging questions of each of us," he said. "Jesus calls us to fly the skies of our minds, to keep the wings flapping."

Hubert Brown, pastor in Inglewood, Calif., and author of *Black and Mennonite*, arrived in time to address the Wednesday morning youth gathering and joint youth/adult session that evening on being the people of God. He began with the observation that it is easy to say you are a Christian in North America today—in fact, it is the socially accepted thing to do. "But too often," he warned, "the behavior, lifestyle and values don't change."

June Alliman Yoder

Ginni Janzen (left) and three Youth Venture volunteers perform movement.

Brown stated his concern that rather than modeling the values of God's kingdom, we have bought into the North American value system. Using the pain he feels about the situation in South Africa as an example, Brown said that "we have failed miserably in the General Conference for failing to do anything about it [apartheid]."

He admonished youth and adults alike that anyone who doesn't protest against militarism, materialism, exploitation of the powerless and other forms of oppression "joins with those who nailed Jesus to the cross."

Brown concluded his message with a plea to the adults in the audience to allow the youth to be bearers of the Good News. He stated that "we have the brightest and the best youth right here. (We should) go out into the world with them, not discourage them from being kingdom people." Brown's remarks were met with an enthusiastic ovation from the gathering.

June Alliman Yoder, instructor in communication and preaching at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind., addressed the youth Thursday, Friday and Saturday

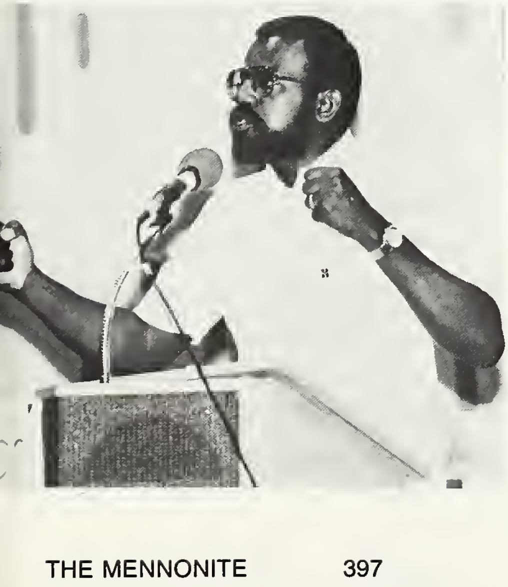
Youth hold their own discussion.

about kingdom work, faith and hope.

In her first presentation Yoder told the youth that "how we choose to spend our time reveals a lot about our commitment to God's kingdom." By listing dozens of phrases about time, she illustrated how time shapes our lives. Her challenge was to give time to God willingly and faithfully.

Yoder used the art of storytelling to illustrate kingdom faith and hope. A set of four stories about faith communicated the need to give God the glory for our accomplishments, not to claim success for ourselves. A modern "prodigal son" tale conveyed the hope for reuniting all peoples in the family of God.

Hubert Brown



Evening sessions were held jointly with the adults. Two evenings featured contributions by the youth. In addition to hearing Hubert Brown on Wednesday evening (which had been designated youth night), a drama written and directed by Vicki Dyck was presented. "Unless a Seed Fall to the Ground . . . It Has Begun" illustrated the biblical parable of the sower in modern terms.

A youth choir performed "Prayer Phrases," a contemporary pop musical inspired by Matthew 6:9-13 and written by Harris Loewen for the Saskatoon conference, on Saturday night.

Workshops provided the youth with an opportunity to concentrate on one subject or activity. Meeting daily throughout the week, youth had workshop options as diverse as practicing for the Saturday-evening musical, discussing social issues and media influences, learning about male/female relationships, sharpening drama, photography and recreation skills, and developing a deeper relationship with Christ. Sponsors met separately to learn how to enhance their ministry with youth.

Another opportunity to learn more about specific topics was through seminars. Each afternoon youth had the choice of various seminars, ranging in subject matter from family communication to Bible study to dealing with peer pressure to sexuality, plus many more.

Daily "kingdom group" meetings provided a setting for responses to the speakers and discussion of what it means to be God's people. Interest in the adult discussion on sexuality resulted in a statement drafted by a number of youth calling for further study of the issue.

Not all the time at the youth sessions was taken up with meetings, however. Late afternoons were free time, during which many youth participated in organized sports or went swimming. Others took advantage of the time to catch up on much-needed sleep.

Activities as different as water-balloon volleyball, a volleyball tournament, concerts by Renaissance, Chuck Neufeld and Road Less Travelled, multimedia presentations, films, circle games and a talent show took place after the evening sessions.

Helping to keep the conference running smoothly were a number of people. Most visible were moderators Mike Epp and Pam Peters. A group of Youth Venture volunteers worked behind the scenes wherever they were needed. Conference coordinator Paula Diller Lehman, GC secretary for youth education, a planning committee of youth and young adults, and youth workers from the various provincial and district conferences put in many hours in preparation and coordination of the event.

Susan E. Janzen is editor of With *magazine.*

The citizens of Nepal are cutting down more and more of the forest there. Their need for firewood with which to cook is inescapable. Unless they find alternative fuels, forests will continue to fall. Helping them in their search for alternative fuels is Mennonite Central Committee worker Mamie Wong, born in China. Wong, who has worked in Nepal since 1980, has tested models of simple biogas plants that produce methane gas from cow and buffalo manure.

Last summer Jean Snyder interviewed elderly Jamaicans and recorded their folk songs, stories and oral histories in a project sponsored by the Jamaican Department of Art and Culture. In a report to Mennonite Central Committee, which partially funded her project, she wrote, ". . . our understanding of the arts, history, traditions, values, customs and life of the people we work with significantly determines the contributions we can make. Unless we learn from the people themselves who they are and why they see themselves and the world and us and God as they do, we have little to offer them but our busyness."

NEWS

Legislation more favorable to COs

Committee alters SS regulations

Washington (MCC U.S.)—The testimony on Selective Service regulations presented by Mennonite Central Committee and several other religious agencies at congressional hearings in May now appears to have born fruit.

On July 31, the House Appropriations Committee approved legislation declaring "null and void" new Selective Service regulations that would have prevented church-related agencies from employing conscientious objectors in times of conscription, where such agencies require commitment to a statement of religious faith.

The committee report language was forceful: "The committee believes these changes compromise fundamental rights of conscience and impose unjustifiable hardship on males seeking . . . alternative service. The committee also believes that the Selective Service did not act in good faith either when first publishing these amendments for public comment or in responding to those comments. Therefore, bill language has been included which, upon enactment of this bill, renders null and void the amendments to the Selective Service regulations."

The regulations would have meant that COs could not do alternative service with MCC and Mennonite voluntary service programs, since they make statements of Christian faith one criteria for selecting personnel, including conscientious objectors doing alternative service when conscription is in effect.

William Yolton, executive director of National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO) commended the work of former NISBCO staff member and MCC U.S. volunteer Chuck Epp, who coordinated the contacts with the congressional subcommittee and the witnesses who testified.

Witnesses included Elmer Neufeld, chairman of MCC, who stated in his testimony at the May hearings that the regulations would invite "court challenges on constitutional grounds and disruption of the system by sincere conscientious objectors who are denied satisfactory alternative service work assignments." Unless the legislation recommended by the appropriations committee is unexpectedly defeated in Congress, the substantial problems described in Neufeld's statement should not develop.

While the committee's reversal is a positive sign, the major turnover in leadership at SS headquarters is strongly military in orientation.

While the committee's reversal of the new regulations is a positive sign, it is noted that the major turnover in leadership at Selective Service headquarters reflects a perspective that is strongly military in orientation. President Reagan's nominee to succeed Selective Service director Thomas Turnage is William Clinkscales Jr., a former Army counterespionage agent. Clinkscales, a controversial figure with the General Services Administration whose job at GSA was abolished, was named by the president, who received persistent requests from Senator Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.).

Constitutional lawyer William Ball, who successfully defended the Amish in "Wisconsin vs. Yoder," a landmark religious liberty case in 1971, provided significant legal analysis, helpful for MCC's earlier statement to Congress on the Selective Service regulations. He emphasized that the regulation would violate the free-exercise clause of the Constitution. "If SSS made assignments solely to non-religious or religious employers who do not require any religious statement, the SSS would be discriminating against MCC on the basis of its religious beliefs."

MCC U.S. Peace Section tried without success to obtain a response from Selective Service to William Ball's definitive five-page critique of the proposed regulations. Selective Service, over a period of 20 months, never responded to the periodic MCC requests for a reply. *Delton Franz*

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A nationwide Campaign of Conscience seeking to change U.S. policy toward Nicaragua was launched July 29 in Washington by 200 religious leaders, including 50 bishops. A million people are expected to join in the campaign by mid-October. The $100 million in U.S. aid to the contras in Nicaragua, approved by Congress in June, was called "a shameful action which betrays the ideals of our nation." Charles Liteky, who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism during the Vietnam War, returned his medal to Congress, the first to do so. He then began a water-only fast.

"Say no. Get away. Tell someone," the 20 fourth graders say loudly and clearly in response to Ann Marklund's question. The three rules are the crux of a sexual abuse prevention program that Mennonite Central Committee U.S. worker Marklund and two colleagues have recently started teaching in elementary schools in Perry County, Ky. The goal is not to hunt for abusers but to educate adults and children alike about abuse and to help those who have been abused.

Leonard and Joan Wiebe have arrived in Aurora, Colo., where they are working toward the formation of a new church. Letters have been sent to 85 addresses of Mennonites living in the greater Denver area. The Fellowship of the New Creation of Tulsa, Okla., which recently terminated, made a contribution to this new start by donating tables, chairs, hymnbooks, a pulpit and overhead projector.

Big presses in Zaire to swing into action

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Henry and Tina Dirks of Virgil, Ont., return to Kinshasa, Zaire, this month to resurrect the presses of the Center of Protestant Literature, known by the acronym CEDI. The giant presses have stood idle since 1981.

A $25,000 commitment from supporting agencies was needed before the Dirkses could have the go-ahead. With funding in place as of June 30, the Dirkses will begin a four- or five-year term of service for the General Conference Mennonite Church. They were missionaries in Zaire also from 1963-1972 and have served there since 1982.

A bookstore was first opened in Kalonda in 1920 and later a literature center. When the Dirkses arrived a new press and other equipment had been installed. They began publishing portions of the Bible, tracts, hymnals, catechisms, Sunday school materials, aids for pastors, schoolbooks and materials for all the Protestant missions in Zaire in 25 languages.

In 1972 the nationals took over, and the Dirkses returned to Canada. The nationals tried but were not successful in operating the equipment. In March it was requested that CEDI be staffed by foreign technicians in order to bring it to its former level of production.

Commission on Overseas Mission executive secretary Erwin Rempel calls the Dirkses' return to Zaire "one of the most strategic and significant events of recent years." He says, "I am pleased about the joint participation of several different church groups (Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Mennonite and others) in making this renewed venture a reality. The silent presses will once again speak through Christian literature in the cities and rural areas of Zaire."

SELFHELP Crafts is celebrating its 40TH anniversary.

SELFHELP Crafts is a volunteer-operated, non-profit program of Mennonite Central Committee. It provides employment and a fair income to disadvantaged persons in developing countries by selling their handmade crafts in North America.

This is an important milestone for SELFHELP Crafts, made possible by countless volunteer hours and craft sales over the past 40 years.

To the thousands of men and women across North America who have supported SELFHELP Crafts as volunteers, customers and members of sponsoring churches, we sincerely say thank you. Because of your efforts, more than 30,000 families in 30 developing nations have been ministered to in a special way, all "in the name of Christ."

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Neil Avenue Mennonite Church, Columbus, Ohio, is planning its 25th anniversary celebration May 2-3, 1987. Anyone who has attended Neil Avenue Church is invited to send name and address to Jan Swartzentruber, 533 Lambourne, Worthington, OH 43085.

Pope John Paul II and Howard Habegger exchange greetings in Bogotá.

At the Vatican Embassy in Bogotá, Colombia, 11 Protestant church leaders met privately with Pope John Paul II on July 2. The delegation included four Mennonites: Howard Habegger, former General Conference missionary to Colombia and executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission who is now pastor at the Union Church in Bogotá; Peter Stucky, executive secretary of the Colombia Mennonite Church; Jose Chuquin, director of World Vision of Colombia and member of the Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Bogotá; and Eric Habegger, English teacher at Colegio Nueva Granada in Bogotá.

Mennonite churches establish mission projects in Portugal

Amadora, Portugal (MCC)—Portugal is the poorest country in Europe. About 10 percent of its 10 million people are recent refugees from Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde and other countries.

The refugees have trouble finding jobs, housing is scarce and children suffer from malnutrition. They receive very little help from organizations and governments outside Portugal. Yet more refugees come every day.

After World War II Mennonite Central Committee worked on a small relief project in Portugal, but otherwise Mennonites have not shown much interest in the small country on the Iberian Peninsula—until recently.

Late last year Greet Lodder, a former MCC-European Mennonite Organization (IMO) Brazil worker from the Netherlands, began an IMO-MCC assignment in Portugal. She organized a kindergarten and later a literacy class for mothers in Amadora, near Lisbon, to help refugees adjust to their new lives in Portugal. The mayor was so impressed with the work that he promised to grant a tract of land for the construction of a center for her work.

Coen Beekhuis and Volker Horsch of IMO and Edgar Stoesz of MCC visited Portugal in July and decided that work at Amadora should be expanded. They also endorsed an investigation of feasibility of a rural resettlement project for young African families with agricultural background.

The beginning of recent Mennonite involvement has its roots in the story of Miguel Angelo, a law student in Lisbon, originally from Mozambique. In 1984 he "happened" upon the book *Free to Forgive* by David Augsburger and was moved by this "fantastic vision of the gospel."

In Angelo's search to find Mennonites he obtained the address of the London Mennonite Centre. He was encouraged by the kind and helpful reply he received from London along with books and the address of Mennonites in Brazil.

Angelo wrote Theo Penner, head of Mennonite Missions in Brazil, who later visited Angelo on his way to the Mennonite World Conference. In 1985 Angelo returned the visit to Brazil and was baptized by Penner, thus becoming the first Portuguese Mennonite.

Angelo's enthusiasm and dynamism quickly led to the formation of a small group which meets for fellowship and discussion every other week. The group has an evangelical spirit and is grounded in Anabaptist theology.

Other Mennonite groups besides MCC and IMO are working in Portugal. In 1984 Mennonite Brethren Board of Missions and Services representatives visited Portugal to look into the possibility of beginning missions work there. During a follow-up visit this year they decided to begin a church-planting work in Loures, a suburb of Lisbon.

In the hope of coordinating Mennonite activities, IMO has invited all Mennonite bodies interested in working in Portugal to a November meeting to talk about goals and coordinate work.

Beekhuis of IMO says, "Portugal presents Mennonites of Europe, North America and Brazil with a tremendous challenge and at the same time with an opportunity to participate in a ministry which integrates service and proclamation [of the gospel] under international sponsorship, in partnership with a young indigenous church." *From a report by Volker Horsch, International Mennonite Organization in Europe, and Edgar Stoesz, MCC Europe*

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More than 8,000 evangelists from 173 countries and territories met July 12-21 in Amsterdam for the second International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists. Welcomed to Amsterdam 86 by honorary chairman Billy Graham, participants heard 21 plenary addresses, attended five conference-wide seminars and selected seven of 141 workshops offering ideas for nearly every imaginable aspect of evangelism, from fund-raising to open air preaching to working with teenagers in the Middle East. The $21 million conference marked what was the most widely representative international meeting in history.

Opening ceremonies at itinerant evangelists conference in Amsterdam

The first of what will be regular meetings between the evangelism and church development staffs of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference was held in Elkhart, Ind., June 11. The group outlined three alternatives for supervising joint church planting projects and agreed to work to initiate the best possible plan in each instance. One idea was to consider a new urban location for a joint church growth and evangelism office.

Shortcomings of government programs for poor in Kentucky

Perry County, Ky. (MCC U.S.)—Shirley, 31, has an 11-month-old child, an 11th grade education, no job and no husband.

She is not a "typical" Appalachian woman. She is not even typical of the 8,000 or so women here in Perry County, Ky., where Mennonite Central Committee U.S. worker Linda Nichols works.

But Shirley's story gives insight into some of the problems in Appalachia and the shortcomings of present public service programs.

Her childhood included a broken home. When her parents were divorced, Shirley and her three brothers were sent to live with various relatives. Shirley lived with her grandmother.

After marrying, Shirley and her husband moved to Illinois, where they had two children. When Shirley's father became ill in Kentucky, she returned to care for him. She had a difficult time dealing with his death and underwent psychiatric counseling.

While she was in Kentucky, her husband had an affair that eventually led to divorce. Because of the psychiatric problems she experienced at her father's death, the court awarded custody of her two children to her ex-husband.

Shirley moved from place to place. In January, she returned to Kentucky from Texas with an 11-month-old daughter. Shirley's grandmother would not accept her back because of her divorce and illegitimate child, so she moved into a poorly insulated shack on the property of her mother and stepfather.

After a fight with her mother, who brought charges against her, Shirley moved in with one of her brothers, an alcoholic. The drinking, noise and verbal abuse drove her from there.

It was then that a friend, the public defender who had defended her in the suit with her mother, called the MCC house, which is known for giving emergency shelter, and Nichols got involved.

It would be nice to be able to report that with Nichols' intervention the problems were resolved. But the local safe house for battered spouses could not take Shirley because her abuser was not her husband. There is no other public shelter in the area, and the MCC house is not suitable for a long-term stay.

The local community action agency provided funds for one week in a local motel and Shirley was able to get food stamps. After a search, Nichols found an aunt who agreed that Shirley and her daughter could stay with them.

Moving in with the aunt meant an end to the food stamps and that Shirley and her daughter could no longer be given priority status for a low-cost housing unit. (There is a two-year waiting list for public housing. Priority is given only to individuals with no housing.)

She was ineligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), welfare, because she could not prove the child was hers without a birth certificate, which takes at least six weeks to get. Without AFDC she could not get Medicaid.

Shirley and Nichols, who is from Melba, Idaho, also searched for a job. But Shirley is poorly qualified, with a poor self-image. She has never held a job for long and sees herself as a loser.

Shirley's problems are far from easy, far from resolved.

While programs such as food stamps, AFDC and Medicaid should be maintained at least at current levels, profound change is needed in the whole public service sector.

Safe house workers should be able to shelter anyone who is abused. Public low-cost housing officials should be able to make exceptions. AFDC workers should be able to grant emergency aid even if a parent does not have a child's birth certificate. Food stamps could be given Shirley even though she is living with an aunt.

After working with poor people in Kentucky for 18 months I feel that welfare regulations, though needed, take precedence over people. Highest priority in Kentucky, and undoubtedly in other states, is placed on stopping abuse of the welfare programs.

Should our zeal to stop welfare abuse overwhelm our desire and responsibility to help poor individuals?

Nichols was able to help Shirley resolve some problems. Equally important, she was able to show Shirley that someone cared and gave her at least a ray of hope.

The welfare system should encourage concern and care for people instead of regulations. Real reform of social systems should have at its base the understanding that those in need deserve respect and dignity. *Renton Amell, MCC U.S. program coordinator in Kentucky*

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Support is growing for the projected 1989 International Congress on World Evangelization, according to Leighton Ford, chairman of the sponsoring Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. The congress is expected to bring together about 4,000 Christian leaders from all regions of the world. "Almost all who have been invited to serve on the International Advisory Council have accepted," said Ford.

Earl Loganbill of Beloit, Kan., has initiated a supplemental endowment for the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. The new endowment is meant to supplement the institute's original endowment of $500,000 given by Bethel alumnus Ken Good. Loganbill has made initial gifts to the supplemental endowment as a memorial to his wife, Elaine (Siebert) Loganbill, who died of cancer on Feb. 16. The total of the Loganbill endowment to date is more than $3,000.

Markham Village is being developed by nine Mennonite churches in southeast Winnipeg that have formed Inter-Mennonite Housing of Winnipeg, Inc. Markham Village is to emphasize intergenerational residency. The main apartment building will be located at its center. This will include a general purpose/chapel area, gift and coffee shop, kitchen, dining room, workshop, crafts room, swimming pool, whirlpool spa, sauna, etc. Surrounding this will be a variety of ground-related units: townhouses, detached and semidetached homes. For information write Walter Dueck, 201-1383 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2B9.

Hopi, Navajo Mennonites seek unity in Arizona land dispute

Hopi and Navajo Mennonites pose with a sculpture of a Hopi Indian. Left to right: Elmer Myron, Peter and Lita Rose Burbank, and Esther, Larry and son Lester Haskie.

Elkhart, Ind. (MBM)—Mennonite members of the Navajo and Hopi Indian tribes are anxious to see peace and unity between their two peoples in the face of the current land controversy in northern Arizona.

Mennonites are the only denomination with churches on both the Navajo and Hopi reservations. The Mennonite Church is involved with the Navajos and the General Conference with the Hopis.

Larry Haskie, a lay leader in the Blue Gap Mennonite Church, a Navajo Mennonite congregation near Chinle, Ariz., and Elmer Myron, a former Hopi pastor now of Phoenix, who just completed two years as administrator of the Hopi Mission School near Kykotsmovi, shared insights during a recent American Indian meeting here.

The U.S. Congress in 1974 passed a law calling for the Hopis and Navajos to equally divide 1.8 million acres of land that had been designated as joint-use land for both Hopi and Navajo. An amendment to the law called for families to apply for relocation benefits by July 6.

Haskie and Myron note that the deadline has passed and not all the families have been relocated.

One reason is that people, as can be expected, aren't hurrying to relocate from land where, in many cases, they have lived all their lives. That might be different if the Navajos and Hopis would have been consulted before the law was passed. But both Haskie and Myron note that that was not the case.

Haskie said that neither tribal council was even aware that the law was in the works until after it was passed. "If Congress needed information, they talked to the Bureau of Indian Affairs office in Phoenix. They didn't even visit the reservation."

To add insult to injury, none of the three members of the Relocation Commission charged with designing a relocation plan are Indians.

Haskie and Myron also note another reason relocation hasn't been completed—the amount of money allocated for relocation was exhausted before the job was done. Since 1977 all of the 24 Hopi families who had to relocate have done so. Four hundred forty Navajo families also have relocated; nearly 240 are left. So the Relocation Commission is asking Congress for more money to continue the relocation.

But the situation remains tense, since some Navajo families, particularly in Big Mountain, say they will not move without protest and struggle. And Hopi tribal chairman Ivan Sidney has said Hopi police will use their jurisdiction on the lands by protecting Hopis who are willing to begin relocating to these lands.

Myron says tribal chairman Sidney and other Hopi leaders want the law enforced but don't want to negotiate with the Navajos, since the Navajos resisted earlier negotiation attempts.

Myron said Hopi tribal chairman Sidney and Navajo tribal chairman Peterson Zah should take initiative and responsibility to identify and discuss common areas of concern that affect both tribes.

"Peace and unity should be given highest priority because it has affected our people too long," Myron said. "Our present Hopi and Navajo children are in need of leaders modeling peace and unity, which will enhance and con-

The Canadian government is spending many dollars to persuade Labrador residents to allow a NATO base at Goose Bay. The Innu (native people who live and hunt in nearby "unpopulated areas") are opposed to the proposal. They are concerned about the effects of low-flying aircraft on caribou herds, bird-nesting habits, birthing of fur-bearing animals and their own ability to continue living in rural areas. They're also concerned about the social impact of an influx of transient people, mostly single males, the availability of jobs and easy cash, increased alcohol use and the consequent family violence.

Mennonite Conciliation Service began in 1979 with Ron Kraybill as the only staff person. The MCS network now consists of 10 regional resource people (or groups) and three community mediation centers. These provide an alternative way of resolving conflicts and handle cases such as tenant/landlord disputes, family conflicts and other neighborhood problems. Although it is often difficult to get both sides to the table, national statistics show that 80 percent of mediated cases are resolved to the satisfaction of both parties.

Third World production of basic food staples will fall short of demand by 70 million metric tons by the year 2000 if past trends continue, according to a new study by the International Food Policy Research Institute. This gap will be one-third larger than the food deficit of developing countries in 1980.

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tribute to the peace values of both tribes."

Myron says he will contact or meet with tribal chairman Sidney to put aside the land issue for a short while so people who are hurting and suffering pain because of relocation, or the prospect of relocation, can be helped. In the meantime, Myron notes that Hopi and Navajo Christians can't wait for their leaders to act.

"We must be reconciled. We have no choice but to be obedient to our Lord and begin as Hopi and Navajo brothers and sisters in Christ to be reconciled."

Myron continued, "It is our duty to take the lead for the sake of peace and unity so that our children and grandchildren will not inherit this situation from us. Pray that barriers will be lifted and the path to peace and unity be opened."

He said that he as a Hopi wants to model peace and unity by making a proposal to the different Mennonite agencies that have Christian ministries on the reservations—Mennonite Board of Missions, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee.

Myron proposes that funds be generated or pooled to begin a joint ministry with the Hopi and Navajo Mennonite churches, leaders, church workers and other Christians who have the same interest and commitment by sharing resources and developing common ministries. Myron is a member of and former staff person for Mennonite Indian Leaders Council of the General Conference.

Haskie theorizes that the energy companies may be behind the relocation effort. "We have seen documents that indicate the presence of oil and coal deposits in the joint-use area where relocation is taking place," he said.

"A long, drawn-out relocation process might facilitate the goal of the federal government stepping in, taking over the land and leasing mineral rights to the energy companies at much cheaper prices."

The two men say very little violence has occurred as a result of the relocation issue. As a symbol of unity and peace among Navajos and Hopis, a special time of prayer was held during the American Indian meeting with Peter Burbank, pastor at Black Mountain Mennonite Church (Navajo), Chinle, Ariz., leading.

Conference on faith development set for February

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Well-known by Christian educators, Kenneth Stokes will lead a conference on "Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle" Feb. 1-3, 1987, at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. "This will be," says coordinator Eleanor Loewen, "a conference for Mennonites with a Mennonite perspective."

Stokes, who has conducted over 100 workshops on this subject, has 18 years of experience as a pastor. He has a seminary degree from Yale University and a doctorate in adult education from the University of Chicago. In 1981 he became project director of Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle, now beginning the interpretive phase, having completed the funding, planning and research aspects. The study is sponsored by the Religious Education Association and 22 other religious organizations. Its purpose is to combine for the first time the growing recognition of the development cycle of adults and the promising concept of faith development.

In addition to Canadian Mennonite Bible College, the conference is sponsored by the Commission on Education and the Congregational Resources Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church. It is recommended for anyone interested, including congregational leaders, pastors, people in helping professions, denominational leaders, college and seminary faculty, administrators and staff.

The conference will create an awareness of how faith development theories and the adult life cycle are related, familiarize participants with the Faith Development and Adult Life Cycle project and raise awareness about practical implications of the project for ministry.

Interested people should contact CRB, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781, or COE, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

CAEBC honors Valencia

Miami—The Directory of the Spanish Language Anabaptist Curriculum for Biblical Education in the Congregations (CAEBC) gave special recognition to Colombian missionary Hector Valencia at a meeting here July 24-27.

Valencia, a missionary with the Commission on Overseas Mission who also served as COM secretary for Latin America, has completed six years of service as editorial director of the adult lesson series. Lupe de Leon, president of the CAEBC, presented Valencia with a plaque.

A team of Latin American Mennonite writers has produced five books in the adult Spanish language curriculum with additional ones continuing to be written in order to eventually complete the series. Marto Quiroga de Alvarez, a Mennonite educator from Argentina, was named editorial director to succeed Valencia.

CAEBC is projecting a new series of lesson booklets in Spanish to be written for children.

Mennonite Your Way Directory V will be published in March 1987. Leon and Nancy Stauffer, originators of the Mennonite Your Way program, say the directory—covering 1987-89—will focus on intentional travel. The Stauffers, who compile the MYW directories with the help of their three children, invite people to write for an application form by Nov. 20 if they wish to be listed as a host in *MYW V.* The address is Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538.

"God Reconciles and Makes Peace" will be the theme for International Peace Sunday, planned as an annual worldwide observance by the International Mennonite Peace Committee, beginning in the fourth quarter of 1986. "IMPC suggests that all our congregations observe International Peace Sunday annually on a Sunday of their choice sometime in October, November or December," says IMPC executive secretary Urbane Peachey of Akron, Pa. Recommended text for the observance is Colossians 1:13-20.

Work has begun on a water purification project in Cachipay, Colombia, engineered by Gordon Wiens, Fresno, Calif., representing the General Conference as a mission volunteer. Wiens, his wife, LeAnna, and children financed their travel to Colombia last September in order to offer a year of voluntary service. El Recreo, the retreat and elementary school center in rural Cachipay, uses dirty water from mountain streams that must be filtered and boiled. When the project is finished, adequate and safe water should be available to the approximately 125 people who use the facility daily.

RECORD

MINISTERS

Alan Moore-Beitler has resigned from the pastoral team at Germantown Church to take a position as campus minister at the University of Pennsylvania.

WORKERS

Bartels

Janzens

Rick and June Friesen

Lederachs

Dorothy and *Robert Bartel*, Rosthern (Sask.) Fellowship, have begun three-year Mennonite Central Committee Canada terms in Goose Bay, Labrador, working as voluntary service coordinators and with Native concerns. The Bartels previously served with MCC in Jamaica. Dorothy and Robert received bachelor's degrees from the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Dorothy in elementary education and Robert in mathematics. Their children are Megan and Robbie. His parents are Dora and John Friesen of Waldheim, Sask. Her mother is the late Agatha Unruh of Waldheim.

Ivan and *Rachel Hilty Friesen*, Danforth Morningside Mennonite Church, Toronto, plan to leave in December for a three-year term under COM/AIMM in Gaborone, Botswana. They will teach biblical languages and church history at the University of Botswana. They have three children.

Rick and *June Ashton Friesen*, Saskatoon, have begun three-year terms under COM/AIMM in Zaire. Their assignment includes construction and maintenance of the Bible institute in Kalonda, medical ministry and work with women. They are scheduled to begin a year of French language study in Belgium this month.

Janet and *Rick Janzen*, Rosthern (Sask.) Church, have begun two-year MCCC terms in Saskatoon, where they are co-directors of service programs. Janet is also working with SELFHELP Crafts. They received master's degrees from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind., Rick in peace studies and Janet in theological studies. Their children are Chris and Stephanie. Janet's parents are Henry and Mary Martens of Coaldale, Alta. His are Nettie Janzen of Winkler, Man., and the late John Janzen.

John Paul and *Wendy Lederach*, Boulder (Colo.) Church, have begun four-year MCC terms in San Jose, Costa Rica. John Paul is a mediator and trainer in conflict management and Wendy is a social worker. Wendy received a bachelor's degree in social work from Goshen (Ind.) College. John Paul received a bachelor's degree in history and peace studies from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. He is a candidate for a doctoral degree in sociology from the University of Colorado in Boulder. They have one child, Angela Jill. Her parents are Mary and Omer Liechty of Leo, Ind. His are Naomi and John M. Lederach of Manheim, Pa.

David Myers, former pastor at Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, Kan., has accepted the position of assistant dean of students at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. He began in the position on Aug. 1. He replaces *Jim Robb*, who has accepted a teaching position in the Sedgwick (Kan.) school district.

West Palm Beach County Commissioner Ken Adams, after a trip to Ethiopia, gave a $3.2 million grant to Neighbors Organized for Adequate Housing (NOAH), a Mennonite Central Committee U.S.-supported program in Belle Glade, Fla. The grant, together with $5 million that NOAH expects to raise from sympathetic banks and other institutions, will be used to alleviate conditions in what the Miami *Herald* has called "the worst slum in the nation." As many as 10,000 people, mostly Haitians and some blacks, crowd into a 10-block inner-city area filled with decaying homes and apartments.

Despite a massive promotion of war toys by the toy industry, with 10 Monday-Friday war cartoons designed to sell these toys, the sales of war toys has fallen off somewhat since the widespread protest against war toys. From May to November 1985 war toys made up four of the top five best-selling toys in America. The International War Toy Boycott initiated nationwide protests in November and December. Since then sales of war toys have fallen significantly. In March only one war toy made the top six. However, war toys still comprise 35 percent of individual toy sales.

Three church leaders met in Salt Lake City, Utah, on July 13 to explore the possibility of establishing a Mennonite congregation there. Don Yoder (for the General Conference) and Darrel Otto and Ray Horst (for the Mennonite Church) talked to resident Mennonites and checked with others who are interested in forming a new congregation.

COMMENTARY

The U.S. military: the country's biggest polluter?

Fresno, Ohio—"War along with everything else that is said about it remains the most ecologically destructive of all human activities," notes Roger Shinn, professor of social ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York in his 1984 book called *For Creation's Sake: Preaching, Ecology and Justice.*

Indeed many scholars of environmental degradation consider the military to be the chief polluter in the United States today. Jonathan King in his 1985 book *Troubled Water*, published by Rodale Press in Emmaus, Pa., documents this.

By its own estimates, the Department of Defense, which includes the navy, the army and the air force, generates 1 billion pounds of hazardous material each year, dwarfing the amount produced by most private companies. The navy says that its ships and shore activities in the United States generate 19 million gallons of liquid hazardous waste and 35 million pounds of hazardous waste solids each year.

The military-industrial complex employs over 4 million people, many more than General Motors, for example. Its operations range from munitions manufacturing to ship and aircraft overhauling to on-base dry cleaning. These operations produce toxic substances, including paints and paint removers, solvents and degreasers, hydraulic fluids, heavy metals, by-products of the production of explosives and chemical warfare agents, pesticides and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), King writes in his book. Many of these chemicals are linked to birth defects, cancer, nerve damage, liver and kidney ailments.

The other major source of military waste is the U.S. Department of Energy, according to King. The DOE's main job is not regulating energy companies or funding research on new sources of energy but developing and manufacturing nuclear weapons.

The DOE maintains 10 nuclear weapon facilities with a combined land area greater than the state of Delaware and produces large amounts of chemical wastes, much of which is radioactive, King reports.

Although the military uses the most up-to-date technology for weapons and communications, it has used the most primitive methods to dump its toxic wastes. Military installations around the country are littered with pits and ponds oozing hazardous waste into water supplies.

The defense department has more than 400 facilities handling or storing waste. These installations contain thousands of sites where waste has been deposited.

The 27-square-mile Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver is described as being "laced with contaminated land and water." The army established this arsenal to manufacture munitions and chemicals for World War II.

In 1957 the arsenal built a 100-acre asphalt lined pit to store its waste but by 1973 that pit had also failed. At that time the Colorado Department of Health discovered two toxic chemicals, DIMP and DBCP, in groundwater north of the arsenal. They ordered the waste discharge to stop.

But 10 years later the waste ponds are still leaking, and chemicals have contaminated over 30 square miles of groundwater.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal was only the first of many such military pollution sites to be discovered, according to King's research. Some 300 wells at the army's Cornhusker TNT plant near Grand Island, Neb., are contaminated with TNT, solvents and RDX, a cancer-causing by-product.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection found concentration of carcinogenic chemicals up to 700 times EPA drinking-water standards in groundwater at Picatinny Arsenal, an army weapons research facility.

One reason that the U.S. military may be considered the biggest polluter is its special status. The defense department, unlike any other federal agency or private company, has full authority to decide what constitutes a contamination problem. The Pentagon controls its own hazardous waste clean up. The EPA is essentially powerless to enforce regulations on the defense department.

Like the Pentagon, the energy department conducts its own environmental monitoring, sets its own radiation exposure levels and decides how to dispose of its waste. The energy department has maintained strict secrecy around the nuclear weapons program since its inception.

Thus the extent of radioactive waste pollution is not known. But it is known that such hazardous radioactive chemicals are dangerous pollutants wherever nuclear installations are located.

"Whatever is done, the American public will end up paying for the pollution generated in the name of defending the country both in dollars and in threatened health, for decades to come," King concludes. *Art Meyer*

The Great American Smokeout celebrates its 10th anniversary Nov. 20. On Smokeout Day each year, smokers try to kick the habit for at least 24 hours. According to the American Cancer Society, smokers account for about 83 percent of all lung cancer cases. An estimated 350,000 Americans will die prematurely this year of diseases linked to smoking.

In Jamaica, Mennonite Central Committee workers reported that crops were destroyed, roads washed out and about 50 people killed in severe flooding on the south coast during the first week of June. MCC donated $5,000 for immediate food purchase in May Pen, an area particularly hard hit by the floods, and for replanting assistance for farmers. MCC also sent $65,000 worth of clothing, bedding, school and health kits and food aid, including canned meat, beans and powdered milk.

The Church of the Brethren endorsed divestment, discussed mission philosophy and elected its first black moderator at the church's annual conference June 24-29 in Norfolk, Va. The 1,040 delegates adopted a policy of divestment from companies that do business in South Africa. They also approved of economic sanctions as a weapon to oppose apartheid. The church's General Board in March divested its holdings in companies that do business in South Africa. It divested $418,000, about 9.4 percent of its portfolio. The Pension Board has holdings of $4.2 million, or 10.3 percent of its portfolio, in such companies.

RESOURCES

The Expository Dictionary of Bible Words (Zondervan, 1985) by Larry Richards includes nearly 1,500 words found in the English Bible, with discussions of the Hebrew and Greek words that underlie their meanings and summaries of their use in the Old and New Testaments. It costs $19.95.

Two church-help books from The Alban Institute, 4125 Nebraska Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20016, are **Moving Your Church Through Conflict** by Speed B. Leas and **So You're on the Search Committee** by Bunty Ketcham. They cost $28 and $6.50, respectively.

The Christian Life Bible (Thomas Nelson, 1985) includes 52 outlines for every book of the Bible, thousands of references, comprehensive instructions, a concordance, full-color indexed maps and a study system. It costs $24.95.

Horace Bushnell: Sermons (Paulist Press, 1986), edited by Conrad Cherry, contains selections from the 19th-century minister, theologian and religious thinker whose concerns included religious education, biblical scholarship, blacks, women and the social order. It costs $12.95.

Two juvenile novels from Herald Press (1985) are **Tree Tall and the Whiteskins** by Shirlee Evans and **Mystery at the Mall** by Marian Hostetler. Each costs $3.95 ($5.35 in Canada).

Relief Aid to Africa: An MCC Report provides an update on needs in Africa and how Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches have responded through MCC. The eight-minute slide set is free from any MCC office.

Spirit in Struggle: A Reader and Study Guide on the Philippines is a 30-page collection of stories and reflections from Mennonite Central Committee workers there and their Filipino friends and co-workers. A revised version of **The Face of Change in Central America** includes a survey of each country in the region, information on the wider church and Mennonite involvements there and a section on refugees. Both packets are available from any MCC office.

Mennonite World Conference and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches have jointly published a study booklet, **Mennonites and Reformed in Dialogue**. It is available from Mennonite World Conference, 528 E. Madison, Lombard, IL 60148, for $3 each, or $2.50 in quantities of five or more, postpaid.

The Amish School (Good Books, 1985) by Sara E. Fisher and Rachel K. Stahl offers down-to-earth details of running an Amish school. It costs $3.95.

What is biblical criticism? What is its value? Its dangers? asks Paul M. Zehr in **Biblical Criticism in the Life of the Church** (Herald Press, 1986). It costs $6.95 ($9.40 in Canada).

The 1985-86 Resource Listing of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Women is available for $2 from Mennonite Central Committee, Box M, Akron, PA 17501. It includes the names and brief resumes of over 200 women in the United States and Canada who are willing to offer their gifts to the church and larger community.

Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage has released a special **"Canadian Migration Feature Issue"** in honor of the bicentennial of Mennonite migration from Pennsylvania to Canada, 1786-1986. It's available for $5 from Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602.

Celebration: the XI Mennonite World Conference, a 26-minute selection of highlights from the 1984 Strasbourg assembly, may be rented for $45 (U.S.) from Inspiration Films, Box 249, La Grange, IL 60525, or $45 (Canadian) from Mennonite Media Society, Inc., 201-1382 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg, MB R2E 0B1.

Beginning each day with a Bible verse and including a morning and evening prayer based on that verse, **Prayers from the Mount** (Westminster, 1986) by J. Barrie Shepherd is a devotional companion and a meditation on the Sermon on the Mount. It costs $8.95.

Volunteers and the Church: From Potential to Action by Val Adolph is available for $7.95 plus $2 postage from William A. Fletcher, Publishing, Box 803, New Westminister, BC V3L 4Z8.

Several Mennonite Central Committee U.S. summer service workers share their experiences in the MCC slide set **Step by Step: MCC Urban Ministries**. The 15-minute program is available for free loan from any MCC office.

The Forgotten Neighbor, a 10-minute dramatization produced by the Mennonite Central Committee Office of Criminal Justice, is about the seriousness of crime victimization and the importance of informed and caring responses to victims. It may be rented for $5 in a slide-audio cassette or a VHS videocassette format or purchased for $40. Order from MCC Office of Criminal Justice, 220 High St., Elkhart, IN 46516.

In **Peace in Our Time?** (Eerdmans, 1986) David Atkinson lays out some of the theological groundwork needed for an exploration of Christian ways of establishing justice and making peace. It costs $4.95.

Without trees people around the world cannot cook their food, build homes, sit on chairs, write on paper. Trees absorb rainwater, provide atmospheric humidity, recycle carbon dioxide and produce oxygen. They protect delicate topsoils and provide habitat for plants and animals. Yet this vital resource is endangered. Only one acre of trees is being planted for every 10 acres cleared. This year Mennonite Central Committee has nine full-time and several part-time workers doing reforestation in 12 countries—Haiti, Bangladesh, India, Lebanon, Zambia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Lesotho, Burkina Faso, Chad and Nigeria.

Mennonites of Hiroshima, active for several years in peace witness in their own city, led a study seminar visit Aug. 8-10 to Nagasaki, the only other city destroyed by nuclear weapons. The weekend featured a "passion" theme, tying together reflections on the passion of Christ, the persecution of the Anabaptists, the bloody history of martyrdom among Japan's Christians, and the story of the atomic bombing, which killed 40,000 people at Nagasaki, including a large number of Christians.

Couples who laugh together usually stay together, according to *Psychology Today.* A study by Connecticut College psychologist Bernard Murstein published in the August issue of the magazine found that couples who share the same sense of humor stay together longer, for humor is "indicative of many things: values, interests, preoccupations, intelligence, imagination and needs."

LETTERS

Add to book review

Thank you for the fine review of *In Search of Refuge* (July 22 issue). In fairness to an important half of the writing team, it should be noted that the book is by Yvonne Dilling with Ingrid Rogers.

Much of the success of the book is the result of Dr. Rogers' vision for the usefulness of the material and her skill in helping to shape it for publication. *Paul M. Schrock, Herald Press, Scottdale, PA 15683*

Aug. 11

Waiting for the church

Before the sexuality issue is closed, now that Saskatoon is over, I would like to address it. For years I lined up to be counted with those who voted at Saskatoon to adopt the resolution on sexuality, which states that homosexuality is wrong. It wasn't until recently, after years of struggle, that I came to accept homosexuals as God's creation and thus accept myself. How self-destructive it was for me to listen to Christians who condemned me and cried, "Amen." How destructive it was for me to deny and loathe that part of myself which is real, unchanging and innate. I thank God for lovingly and patiently teaching me that indeed I am a unique creation upon whom God looks and says, "It is good." I thank God for allowing me to understand in a unique way the heart and pain of Jesus, who was "despised and rejected" by the multitudes and by those that he loved.

Recently I paid a high price for being all that I was created to be when I was denied a job working with "the church" that I would have loved, that would have used my unique gifts. It hurts to know that "God's people" are not ready to accept my gifts, and I hurt for them as well as for myself. The body of Christ is not whole but has lost an important functioning part. How I long for the day when the "church" can be complete. How I long for the day when Christians stop pretending to have all of the answers for each other. Let's acknowledge that on some levels we only "see through the glass darkly." I long for the day when we each spend time on our knees with our God searching for our own answers and allow others to do the same. I truly long for the day when "the church" and "all God's people" learn the lesson that Peter did when God put "unclean" meat before him and said, "Eat." How good it will be when each of us can be all that God uniquely calls us to be—can eat what God calls us to eat, and can join hands and together serve the God who calls us each differently but each by name. *Deborah Spooner, 9 Bannock St., Denver, CO 80223*

Aug. 11

Mennonites and art

I am appalled to find in yet another issue of *The Mennonite* (July 22) more letters voicing negative views toward the sculpture by Edwina Sandys. I feel I must let my voice be heard to a more positive effect. A piece of art is made to generate thought. It is not enough to merely look at a sculpture or painting and like or dislike it. One must contemplate its meaning, what it means to you, what it means to the artist. Not all art is going to be pleasing to everyone. This does not mean one cannot expand his or her horizons by trying to understand the artist's issue.

For myself, Sandys' sculpture is a symbol of the struggles women have battled in this age of growing equality and also a reminder that Jesus cares for us and feels our struggles even more strongly than we do. *Patrica Ward, 624 Pioneer Court, Missoula, MT 59801*

Aug. 12

When I first saw the picture of the female on the cross (May 27 issue), I thought it was interesting but of no great significance. But readers of *The Mennonite* have changed my mind. They have given the picture more response than any article in my memory, calling the statue devil's work, obscene, offensive and blasphemous. Why?

Over the years Jesus has been depicted in a variety of ways by artists: blond-haired and fair-skinned, rough and tough, dark-skinned and muscular, glowing with light, and covered with dirt. Why is it more objectionable to portray Christ as woman than as white? Neither is historically accurate.

I doubt the artist is trying to tell us that Jesus was a woman. Rather she is asking, "What would it look like if Jesus had been a woman?" That her sculpture has touched off such a stream of protest tells us more about ourselves than about her art.

There are many things more inherently blasphemous than this statue. For example, "In God We Trust" written on our money, gold crucifixes sold as charms, weapons decorated with crosses or preachers calling for more nuclear weapons. *Peter Graber, 613 N. Main St., Bellefontaine, OH 43311*

Aug. 14

Conference committees for 1986-89

General Board

Ken Bauman (president)	Berne, Ind.
Florence Driedger (vice president)	Regina
Myron Schultz (secretary)	Bloomfield, Mont.
Richard Early	Souderton, Pa.
Loretta Fast	Newton, Kan.
Jake Fransen	Smithville, Ont.
John R. Friesen	St. Catharines, Ont.
Al Heer	Paso Robles, Calif.
Anna Juhnke	North Newton, Kan.
Dorothea Janzen	Hillsboro, Kan.
Peter Kehler	Clearbrook, B.C.
Lynn Liechty	Berne, Ind.
Ken Loewen	Gretna, Man.
Ivorie Lowe	Markham, Ill.
Edgar Rempel	Winnipeg
Winona Rempel	Winnipeg
Ben Sprunger	Worthington, Ohio
Jeanne Zook	Portland, Ore.

Division of Administration

Wayne Mumbauer (chair)	Harleysville, Pa.
Paul Dyck (vice chair)	Bluffton, Ohio
Gladys Graber (financial secretary)	Buhler, Kan.
Richard Rosenberger (recording secretary)	Quakertown, Pa.
Loretta Fast	Newton, Kan.
Edgar Rempel	Winnipeg
Marlene Suter	Markham, Ill.
Elmer Wall	Freeman, S.D.

Commission on Education

Eric Sawatzky (chair)	Elkhart, Ind.
Lois Preheim (vice chair)	Aurora, Neb.
William Toews (vice chair)	Leamington, Ont.
Elaine Rich (secretary)	Bluffton, Ohio
Kathy Bauman	Schwenksville, Pa.
Ardys Becker	Richmond, B.C.
Brian Epp	Henderson, Neb.
Louise Friesen	Saskatoon
James B. Howard	Newburg, Ore.
Irene Klassen	Calgary
Ken Loewen	Gretna, Man.
Irvin Richert	Quakertown, Pa.
Ben Sprunger	Worthington, Ohio

Commission on Home Ministries

Dorothy Nickel Friesen (chair)	Manhattan, Kan.
Malcolm Wenger (vice chair)	Newton, Kan.
Milton Harder (secretary)	Geneva, Neb.
Floyd Bartel	Newton, Kan.
David Chiu	Saskatoon
Annette Eisenbeis	Marion, S.D.
Henry A. Fast	Newton, Kan.
Warren Habegger	Berne, Ind.
Ray Hamm	Altona, Man.
Lynn Liechty	Berne, Ind.
Ivorie Lowe	Markham, Ill.
Neill VonGuten	Riverton, Man.
Mei-Li Warmkessel	Sunnyvale, Calif.
Leonard Wiebe	Aurora, Colo.
Mark Winslow	Allentown, Pa.

CHM U.S.

Willis Busenitz	Busby, Mont.
Pearl Janzen	Reedley, Calif.

Commission on Overseas Mission

Jeanne Zook (chair)	Portland, Ore.
William Block (vice chair)	Winnipeg
James Juhnke (secretary)	North Newton, Kan.
Maryanne Boschman	Abbotsford, B.C.
Kathleen Driedger	Winnipeg
Viola Ediger	Regina
Anna Ens	Winnipeg
John R. Friesen	St. Catharines, Ont.
Anita Froese	Altona, Man.
Jessie Gaeddert	Denver
Mary Kay Gerig	Goshen, Ind.
Alice Ruth Ramseyer	Elkhart, Ind.
Charles Sprunger	Harleysville, Pa.
Larry Tschetter	Freeman, S.D.

Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Menno Epp (president)	Calgary
Darrell Fast (vice president)	Newton, Kan.
Waldemar Janzen (secretary)	Winnipeg
Marjorie Ediger	Arvada, Colo.
Dorothea Janzen	Hillsboro, Kan.
Fred Liechty	Berne, Ind.
Dietrich Rempel	Clearbrook, B.C.
Myron Schrag	Minneapolis
Donovan Smucker	Waterloo, Ont.

Women in Mission

Elsie Flaming (president)	Leamington, Ont.
Ruth Ramseyer (U.S. vice president)	Smithville, Ohio
Irene Klassen (Canadian vice president)	Calgary
Helen Friesen (secretary)	Butterfield, Minn.
Velma Balzer	Inman, Kan.
Evaleen Bertsche	Chenoa, Ill.
Louise Block	Essex, Ont.
Anita Froese	Altona, Man.
Lois Kaufman	Parker, S.D.
Margaret Miller	Quakertown, Pa.
Marlene Schroeder	Newton, Kan.
Lois Wedel	Aberdeen, Idaho

New GC president Bauman: 'Move ahead'

At Saskatoon '86 Ken Bauman, pastor at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., since 1973, was elected General Conference president. He replaced Jake Tilitzky of Abbotsford, B.C., who had served the maximum six years.

A missionary in India for 18 years (1954-72), Bauman just finished a 13-year stint on the General Board. During that time he has also served as a Bluffton (Ohio) College trustee, as a member of the MC/GC human sexuality committee and a member of the theological education committee of the Mennonite Church.

In an interview July 27, Bauman said he sees his main task as helping the conference to "move ahead in fulfilling the four goals [passed at the triennial sessions]." He finds the focus of the goals helpful, he said. "People will rally around because these are the goals that people already expressed." And the goals "cut across all program areas."

What effect will this position have on him? It will not make him *more* conference-minded, he insisted, but it means a greater weight of responsibility. He'll need to see things in a broader context.

A new element of the position of GC president is that it will include working about one-fourth time visiting GC churches. Bauman said his congregation discussed this possible arrangement and supported it. The General Conference will then reimburse the Berne church for his time away from his pastoral duties. His schedule for visiting churches is still pending.

Bauman sees his strength for the position as working with people of various views while still holding his position. He has experience with other groups in which different backgrounds are represented. The part of the job he doesn't relish is handling parliamentary procedure. "I'm more practical oriented," he said. "I see myself as a coach who helps people do the task together." And he wants the team to "move on." *Gordon Houser*

WM celebrates, MM plans to grow

While Women in Mission celebrated 69 years of ministry in the General Conference at Saskatoon '86, a revitalized Mennonite Men outlined a plan to expand its ministry. Each group met July 23.

Over 650 women crowded into Grosvenor United Church for the WM program, which centered on the 1986 theme, "Teach Me Kingdom Ways." Members of the WM executive committee gave a readers' theater presentation of "Walking the Kingdom Path" by Lois Deckert, editor of *Window to Mission.* Ruth Unrau shared stories from her book *Encircled*, which tells of the diversity of Mennonite women. The book was a cooperative effort of WM and the Commission on Education.

Earlier, in its first report at a plenary triennial session, WM used a large quilt to mark its 69 years of ministry.

Mennonite Men president Irvin Voth noted that the presence of 200 men was quite a change from three years earlier, when only 10 showed up.

He presented a plan calling for part-time staff for MM, an expense budget and regular consultation with WM.

MM treasurer David Quiring reviewed the history of the Tenth Man program, which has been a major impetus for reviving MM. The concept for this program is that participants commit themselves to donate $100 twice a year for church-planting projects. The original goal was to have 500 members. At present 340 participate. Thus far income has been over $77,000. Churches in San Francisco, Boulder and Fort Collins, Colo., have received financial support.

Since the Conference of Mennonites in Canada's Congregational Resources Board has a different method for funding capital projects in church-planting situations, an amendment was made that Tenth Man be the primary plan in the United States. Canadian Mennonite Men will need to develop in ways appropriate to their own national and provincial structures.

Palmer Becker of Richmond, B.C., spoke to the group about risk taking. He challenged the men to (1) "risk beginning a men's fellowship or revitalizing it," (2) "risk presenting Tenth Man to that fellowship or to the larger church" and (3) "risk starting a new church." *From reports by Sharon Sommer and Bernie Wiebe*

The WM quilt is unveiled.

Taking wing: bearing the faith

"Wings," *a two-act play by Victoria Dyck, Rosthern, Sask.*

Reviewed by Muriel T. Stackley, who saw the play at Saskatoon '86

Deep in the womb of a 16th-century prison cell, four women prisoners tend each other, yearn together, comfort, admonish, correct, hold, heal. Their crime: being Anabaptists.

Covering a span of nine months, this play allows us to watch the four principal players change and regress and mature. At the end, one—Anna—is born into eternal life, and thus her name is added to our book of death, *The Martyr's Mirror*, which is the primary source for playwright Dyck's story.

Anna also begins the play in a symbolic sense by telling the other three longingly, wistfully, about her husband's professional skills. "Jan has found a good dye—a red dye that will not run."

But all during the play we are made aware that blood, on the other hand, does run. Sarah has experienced the torture of having her body stretched mercilessly on the rack. Maria wears blood-soaked bandages on her thumbs after having had screws applied by her interrogators. Elizabeth, so strong in the first act, reminds the others that "their white robes will be washed in the blood of the Lamb."

Suffering, however, is linked to hope, and together suffering and hope are inextricably linked to resurrection. "To bear the faith," Dyck reminds us, "as a woman bears a child . . . the pain and the joy are one."

At moments during the play that joy erupts as humor. Hearing some of the religious dogma of the official church, Anna comments drolly, "I would as soon call God Henry." Pushed by interrogators on the subject of transubstantiation, Sarah ridicules the idea: How can they possibly think of communion bread as the physical body of Christ, considering the undignified destination of human waste?

Questioned about the sharp tongues that the four women exhibited in answering the authorities, Dyck said, "It's all in *Martyr's Mirror*. In fact, I had to tone it down."

She goes on. "To be woman and 'Anabaptist' was to leave family behind. Hundreds of children were born in prison only to be taken away at birth and given to Catholic families. To be women and 'Anabaptist' was to have the world believe the awful lie of you, that all women were shared by Anabaptist men. They gave up family and reputation long before they gave up their lives."

Elizabeth (right) comforts Anna by pointing out a nest of winging birds.

Tender personal correspondence between Anna and Elizabeth and their husbands is skillfully directed. Elizabeth's eventual recanting of her faith (and subsequent release from prison), somewhat inadequately developed, seems to begin when she hears that her husband has been martyred. Anna's husband, Jan, writes, "We will meet each other at the altar."

Words from the Bible form the structure of "Wings." The four women's care of each other, their answers to the authorities, their letters—all reveal their love and use of Scripture. Unforgettable is their sharing of rations: "Eat ye all of it; drink ye all of it."

"Wings" transfixed me—even though I saw it late at night after a long day, and even though the second act needs some tightening. These four women are my mothers.

Among the comments from conference-goers were these:

"I regret that our theological educators did not speak up in the discussions on the conference floor. We need to hear from them how they see these issues that many members see as important. At least they need to tell us why they are not taking part." *Gary Harder, Edmonton*

"We Mennonites are conscientious to a fault. We feel we need to report everything. Reporting time was filled with too many words. Some words were time-consuming, trivial and repetitious. Those of us who sit and listen for 11 hours a day would wish for a thriftiness of words." *Frances Becker Ewy, Fresno, Calif.*

Ray and Brenda Martin Hurst, new co-pastors at Tabor Mennonite Church in rural Newton, Kan., were en route to Saskatoon '86 when their car broke down in Fargo, N.D. In checking around for the nearest Mennonites, they contacted Harold W. Nussbaum, pastor at the Casselton (N.D.) Mennonite Church. The Nussbaums immediately came and picked up the couple. Casselton Church members made three different offers of cars. The Hursts came to Saskatoon in one of them while their car's transmission was being repaired. They considered this a "kingdom coming" experience.

MEDITATION

The kingdom trek

During the 1980 triennial sessions in Estes Park, Colo., I committed my first felony. I intentionally broke the law that ordered men born in 1961 to register with the Selective Service so that the government would know how many soldiers might be available to fight a war.

Through a long, hard look at the Bible I had come to the conclusion that registering with the military was not compatible with my understanding of Christianity. A central passage for me was Luke 9:51 and following. Jesus and his disciples were going to Jerusalem and had to pass through Samaria. When Jesus sent messengers to ask for a place to stay, the Samaritans refused. This unfriendly response made James and John—the "sons of thunder"—ask Jesus if they could "call down fire from heaven and burn them up." Jesus, of course, said no.

In 1979 the Iranians were keeping 52 Americans hostage, and the Soviet Union had just invaded Afghanistan. The world was not being friendly to the United States. And the government prepared to "call down fire from heaven."

Jesus, saying, "No, you can't do that" to James and John, said to me in 1980, "No, you can't help the government get ready to call down fire from heaven by registering for the draft."

This issue became sharply personal when the Selective Service turned me over to the Justice Department for prosecution. For almost two years a small group of us lived with a constant awareness that we could be taken to court at any time and sentenced to five years in prison and fined $10,000.

During these years, my faith was alive and well. Speaking to churches and youth groups, leading workshops and editing a newsletter for non-registrants made peace themes a regular part of my life. Going to church and small group, prayer and Bible study all had meaning.

In the summer of 1983 the Justice Department became silent, and we heaved a sigh of relief. But as registration issues died away I felt a part of me dying away too. Bible study fell by the wayside, as did most prayer and reflective thinking on my faith. God felt distant.

Over the next two years, I came to understand how a cause had affected my spiritual vitality. I learned the biblical reality: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:34). Registration issues helped me invest treasure, time and energy in the kingdom of God. When registration dropped out of my life, so did my most solid investments in the kingdom.

In the last year I have again started investing myself in the kingdom of God. The turnaround began in April 1985 when I received word that the Justice Department was reopening my case after almost two years of silence.

But lots of things were different: the possible fine ($250,000 instead of $10,000), the political climate and my energy level, among other things. In the end my wife, Ann, a congregational support group and I decided I should register so that the government would drop the case.

Before I registered, however, Ann and I examined what might fill the void that registration would leave behind. Through our church we learned that Goshen, Ind., has some significant housing problems. Too many people have to rent houses with leaky roofs, rats and other problems. Ann and I decided we wanted to help.

We have made significant progress on Goshen's housing issues. But just as important to me is that I am once again investing myself in the kingdom of God. That investment is necessary for my faith to grow.

Byron Weber-Becker, 3100 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, is a computer programmer for Mennonite Mutual Aid and a member of the Assembly Mennonite Church. The above is adapted from his faith story told at the Saskatoon '86 triennial sessions.

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Cover, Bernie Wiebe; 390-393, Gordon Houser, Bernie Wiebe, Brenda Suderman; 395, Gordon Houser; 396, 408, 409, Bernie Wiebe; 396 (top), 397 (bottom), Steve Ropp; 397, Erin Gundy; 400, Eric Habegger; 410, Brenda Suderman.

THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

A fresh call to kingdom commitments

"It usually takes some outside force to make us change. This can be either positive or negative. Often it's a negative one. In my case, it was the deaths—within six weeks—of two people special to our family. I suddenly realized that life doesn't always go on as we now know it. For me it meant some important decisions" (Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, former attorney and GC Division of Administration member from Reedley, Calif., now enrolled at Mennonite Biblical Seminary).

Duane gave the above response at the Saskatoon triennial conference, July 21-27, during a discussion of the new multiconference development plan. This plan, adopted by the delegates, calls for four things: (1) a commitment to pray for spiritual renewal throughout the whole body of GC churches, (2) a commitment to call out potential new leaders from our midst, (3) a commitment to work toward the four GC goals: to evangelize, to teach and practice biblical principles, to develop and train leadership and to seek for unity, and (4) a commitment to raise $17.5 million over the next triennium, above usual budget giving.

When someone asked how spiritual renewal goes together with such a massive fund-raising campaign, Duane told his own story. He then added, "What I like about this plan is that it's a positive force in our lives. It will give each of us a chance to examine ourselves."

Another GC lawyer, Carol J. Suter, also had her vocation change in the last few years. Carol was asked to put aside her practice and become the director of this development plan.

One of the reasons I have liked this plan from the start is because of the above stories. The idea was first presented by the administration people to the General Board. They sensed a malaise in GC giving over the last years. And their conclusion was that a dimmed enthusiasm spiritually was at the root.

When they found listening ears among the General Board, they planted a vision. Let's challenge our people to pray for a fresh spirituality. Let's invite one another to dream new dreams of what we as a General Conference people—at all levels of our faith life—could yet do. Let's not be afraid to attach a price tag to these dreams.

It's a radically new idea for us, and the response was quite slow. Area meetings to discuss this dream were generally poorly attended. We are struggling with budgets at all levels, said the people; it's not smart to try this massive plan.

"No, it's not smart," said others. "It's a step of faith." It's daring to believe our people can catch new visions and dream new dreams in Christ. And it's daring to believe that as we join together in this quest, pocketbooks and checkbooks will be allowed to speak in fresh ways. Besides, when you spread $17.5 million over the whole GC membership in a three-year period, it comes to the price of about two cups of coffee per week.

I've been wondering whether that might be adapted for our slogan: "Over the next triennium, buy or pay for two extra cups of milk, tea or coffee in the name of Christ." It sounds related to the biblical assertion in Matthew 25:35.

The extra effort of special, specific prayer for our conference, for our staff and for the people we want to serve will serve us more than those we pray for. It always does.

There is not the shadow of a doubt that we can raise the extra $17.5 million if we want to. That giving will also bless us much more than those dollars will help others.

When our own renewal joins the fresh projects we support and joins what this does to people we serve, then together we shall truly see revival. God promised that to his first people (2 Chronicles 7:14) and his promise holds today.

It has already changed the vocational plans of two GC lawyers. Are you and I also open to renewal?

Let's go for it. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

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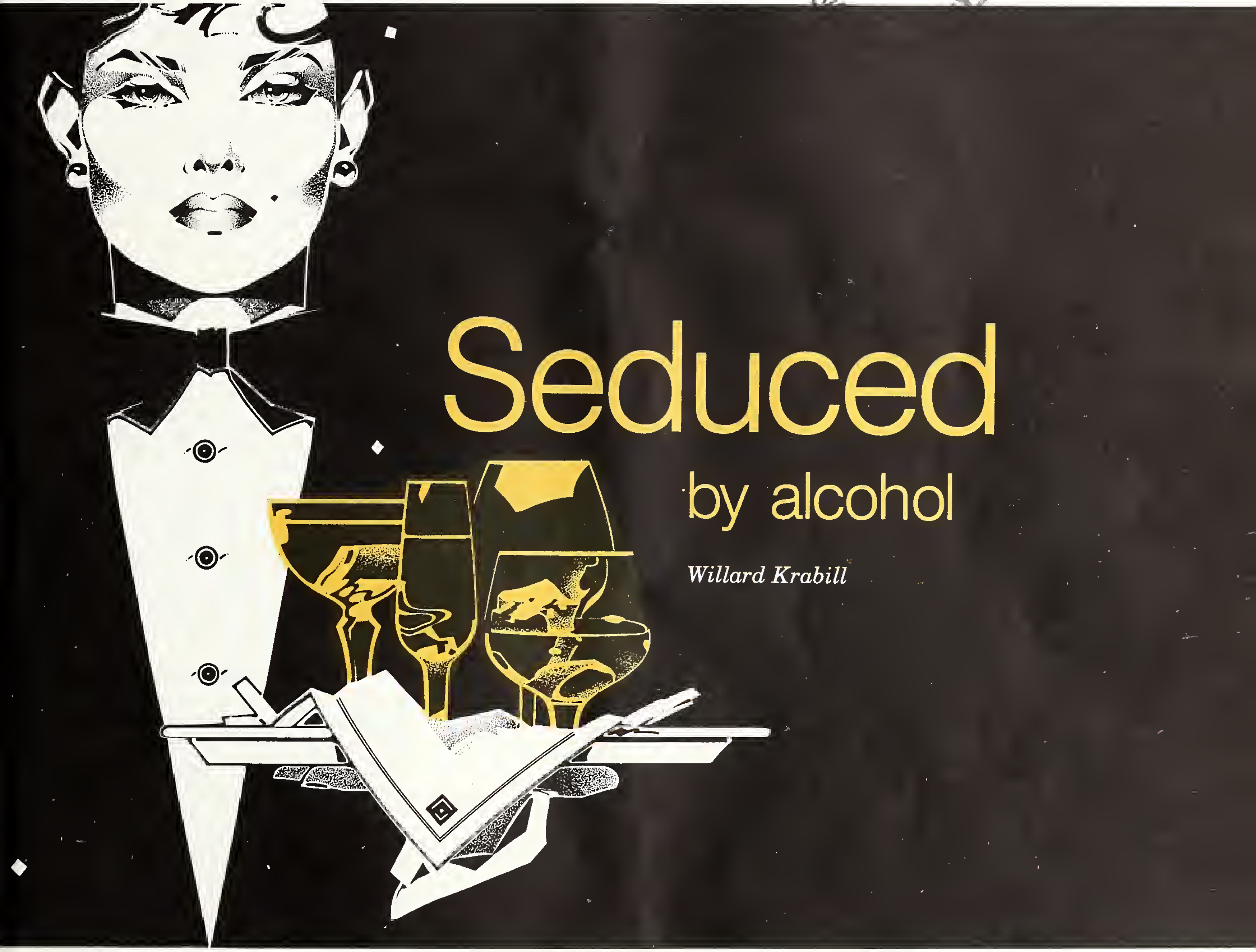

Seduced by alcohol

Willard Krabill

> *"Compared to alcohol's toll, the human, social and economic costs of heroin use, even of cocaine use, don't yet come close."*

Seduction has been defined as "persuading to engage in activity that is contrary to one's initial desire and one's best interest." There is inherent in seduction an element of manipulation, of deceit, or a taking advantage of another's limited knowledge. Being seduced leaves a person feeling betrayed or foolish and less willing or able to trust.

One of society's assumptions is that all seduction is sexual seduction. Seduction does happen too often among us in male-female relationships. But there is another seduction going on in our society that is rarely recognized. That is the seduction surrounding the use of alcohol.

All the elements of seduction are present: enticement, persuasion, manipulation, taking advantage of limited knowledge, creating false expectations. These induce in individuals behavior that is not in their best interests. And like a lover being led down the primrose path, they deny that it's happening and vehemently defend the seducer.

I see the seduction of sex and the seduction of drugs as part of a larger, overall seduction. The overall seduction is in the way humankind has been deceived as to what really matters in life, what life's meaning and purpose is, what is real and what is false.

The wrong uses of sex and drugs have to do with having bought into the ways and the values of society so completely that we hardly recognize what is truth and what is a lie. People seem not to recognize seduction when it stares them in the face. Sexual exploitation is endemic in our society, and so is harmful alcohol use.

U.S. and Canadian cultures always have been drinking cultures; currently the use of alcohol is out of control. In our cultural love affair with alcohol, there are many false messages—the "old lines"—that one can choose to believe on the way to being seduced.

False message 1: Alcohol is not a "hard" drug. All the available evidence tells us otherwise. It is a sedating and addicting drug, the major drug of abuse in our countries, the drug which contributes to so many problems and other diseases that public health officials consider it the third leading cause of death in the United States. All those deaths are not just of hard-core alcoholics.

Compared to alcohol's toll, the human, social and economic costs of heroin use, even of cocaine use, don't yet come close. Alcohol is a "real" drug, a "hard" drug, and those who use alcohol have thereby chosen to be a part of the drug culture.

A second myth: Alcohol is acceptable because it is legal. Law and truth are not synonymous. The U.S. government still subsidizes with millions of dollars the growing of a plant, the dried leaves of which are smoked by one-third of our citizens, resulting in 300,000 deaths a year. Tobacco use is legal. In many communities pornography also is perfectly legal. Is pornography acceptable?

The third myth: I am somehow immune to all the problems of alcohol use; "problem use" happens only to less enlightened, irresponsible people who can't control themselves. Just as night follows day, with increased use come increased consequences. The more of us who use it, the more hell we will collectively experience because of it.

It's simple mathematics, based on the knowledge of the effect of this drug on the human body and on human experience. The risk of alcoholism is 10 percent. Select a group of 1,000 people; let's say 50 percent of them drink (and that percentage might be higher). Eventually 50 of those people will have to accept the fact they are alcoholic, and another 50 will have significant problems with alcohol.

Fifty will either see their educations wasted and their marriages, careers and family lives sacrificed on the altar of booze, or they will spend years going to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, spending untold time and energy to regain their sobriety. To assume that this scenario is not reality is to be seduced.

The fourth myth. Using alcohol "in moderation" is harmless. The growing mass of research data tells us otherwise. It isn't harmless when the user is driving a car or is pregnant or hypertensive or diabetic or epileptic or any of many other conditions in which alcohol use is contraindicated.

To believe that alcohol, in any amount, is free of risk is to be seduced into ignoring the data. And educated people are supposed to understand the meaning and force of studies, research and data. Quite apart from the 10 percent risk of alcoholism, those who drink in moderation should know that (1) with one drink, and a blood-alcohol level of only 0.02 percent, our dynamic visual acuity, peripheral vision and ability to adapt to darkness begin to become impaired. Studies in Canada on airline pilots have shown that the visual impairments of alcohol use may persist for eight to 14 hours, long after the alcohol has been cleared from the bloodstream.

2. By the time the blood alcohol level reaches 0.10 percent, the legal limit for driving, users are so impaired they are seven times more likely to have an accident. Actually, there is no level of blood alcohol known to be "safe" for driving. So, after drinking, how is one to get home?

3. Alcohol increases the irritability of the heart muscle so that a sharp blow to the chest, as from a steering wheel, can produce a fatal heart arrhythmia, especially in a teenager. Thus, raising the drinking age to 21, which 34 states already have done, has a physiological as well as a social and political basis.

4. Alcohol used in combination with other drugs increases memory loss. Recent studies suggest that alcohol in moderate amounts causes loss of cognitive function and of brain cells.

5. There is little good news about moderate use coming from researchers in the field. One researcher said recently, "We have to conclude that the human organism is particularly ill-equipped to handle this drug (alcohol)."

The fifth myth, which we tend to believe on the road to being seduced, **concerns the reasons we drink**. People *continue* to drink for many reasons, but peer acceptance is the overwhelming reason individuals *start* drinking.

Users do *learn* to like the taste, "the buzz" and the effect of alcohol. But novices *start* drinking because they think it's the way to get friends, because it's sociable and fashionable and the way to "belong."

In the first place, that is not true. Many beautiful and worthwhile people are turned off by the drinking scene. They too would like to be friends. They too want to belong, but not to the drug seduction scene. They don't like what they see alcohol doing to their friends and relationships.

How poor we are, how lacking in imagination and creativity, if we need to be drugged to experience excitement and fun.

The sixth myth: Alcohol use "fits" with a healthy lifestyle, with wellness and fitness. It's been interesting seeing the growth of both the wellness/fitness movement and of alcohol use and acceptance in our countries. Inevitably, the two trends collided. The September 1985 issue of *Health* magazine carried an article about the "collision."

It opened with a photo of people at a party, glasses raised, some dancing. However, this party is different. As *Health* notes, "So what sets this party apart? Well, nobody is having a heated political debate. Not one of the dancers has fallen on the floor. All of the faces look bright and intelligent, not droopy and dulled. In other words, no one has had too much to drink."

Such parties are "politically stylish," the article says, and recounts the results of a recent Gallup poll which shows that the percentage of Americans who drink at least occasionally has declined from 71 percent to 65 percent.

The reason? "We've become body conscious," the article notes, quoting one Los Angeles resident as saying, "After doing all this hard work for your body, why spoil it with alcohol?"

A crutch such as alcohol hinders rather than enhances our becoming "all we're meant to be."

The seventh myth: Everybody's doing it, and a non-use lifestyle is naive. More than 30 percent of Americans never drink, and we Mennonites are accustomed to being part of minorities much smaller than that.

The number of non-users is growing for several reasons. The slaughter on highways and the association of alcohol with all kinds of accidents, crimes, suicides and abuse of others has revolted the public.

The growing body of research data—both medical and non-medical—is persuasive too. A Stanford University study showed an inverse relationship between the amount of alcohol consumed and students' grade-point averages.

The consumer-rights movement is prodding the alcohol industry on several fronts, including working for listing of all ingredients, including harmful additives, on alcohol products and trying to ban all alcohol advertising on radio and television. In today's alcohol advertising we see a prime example of the grossest kind of seduction.

Of course, none of us considers his or her own use inappropriate. What could possibly be wrong with a glass of wine with our meals? No big deal? Perhaps not, as long as one is not seduced into believing that one glass is risk-free or responsibility-free, as long as users are prepared to accept the potential risks to heart, brain and liver (the extent of which we've just begun to discover), as long as they don't drive afterwards and as long as they are willing to decide constantly how much is OK.

How much is OK if one is going to drive? If one is pregnant? If one is hypertensive? If one is taking a cold medication? How much before one begins to act silly or become obnoxious, loud or even stupid? How much, how much, how much?

"Alco-Check" is an electronic breathalizer that gives an immediate reading on the alcohol level in the body. It is regrettable that our society has come to the place where such checks are essential for the safety of our streets and highways. Slow progress is being made in helping people to see that alcohol may be the most dangerous drug being used in our society.

A glass of wine with our meals? No big deal? Perhaps not, as long as users are willing to accept the fact that they are thereby identifying themselves as part of the drug scene, as long as they recognize that they are participating in the seduction of more vulnerable people around them, as well as being among the seduced.

The user of alcohol must accept the fact that his or her use influences others to be users, others whose use might be destructive.

Perhaps it is no big deal. Some will consider the benefits to be worth the risks. But they should not be seduced into thinking there are neither risks nor responsibilities involved. There are—and they are substantial.

We often tend to think that non-use is antiquated, "out of sync" with the times. Let me suggest that non-users are probably ahead of the times and getting more up-to-date with every research article published. I predict that in 20 years the U.S. Surgeon General will be condemning alcohol in the same way and with the same language now used for cigarette smoking.

Non-use is not Puritanism; it is common sense. Non-drinkers are telling us there is a better way to be an authentic person and to have fun than using drugs.

I invite you all to join in—to move each other and this society to another way of living, to experience a life of satisfaction, wholeness, hope and joy without the assistance of recreational drugs.

In the past year several students from our church colleges died due to alcohol use by other drivers or by themselves. Michigan State University quickly reinstated one of their star basketball players even after repeated alcohol offenses. Most of us know about the obscene nature of Pelle Lindbergh's—the Philadelphia Flyers all-star goaltender—tragic death.

Why is it tolerated? Because we've been seduced.

Let's do something about it.

Willard S. Krabill, M.D., M.P.H., is college physician and associate professor of health education at Goshen (Ind.) College. This article is adapted from a speech presented to a student convocation at Goshen College, Nov. 20, 1985.

But we ain't lost

Leonard Beechy

A city-slicker drives down a dirt road in Nowhere. Squinting into the countryside for some source of help, he sees, walking ahead of him, a young boy, dressed in Osh-Kosh b'Gosh and barefooted. The city-slicker pulls up his car in a cloud of dust and rolls down his window.

"Young man, can you tell me where I can find the nearest service station?"

No sir.

"Well, then, can you direct me to the nearest public telephone?"

No sir.

"Then can you at least tell me how to get onto a main road?"

Nope.

"You don't know much, do you, boy?"

Maybe not, but I ain't lost.

This story interests me for a couple of reasons.

One reason is that it's old; I've found it in different versions in several collections of American folklore. The longer a story lives, the more it reveals about the people who keep it alive. We root for country folk. We sense, rightly, that our roots are in the woods and in the barnyard. Scratch our national subconscious, and you'll smell cow manure. We respond to stories in which uptight, driven city-slickers are brought up short by innocent, ignorant hayseeds who don't know much but know where they are and who they are. During the '60s, that great national crisis of self-understanding, our favorite television shows, according to the Nielsen people, were *Andy Griffith, Green Acres, The Beverly Hillbillies, Petticoat Junction* and *The Real McCoys.* The father of the United States is Huck Finn.

But there's another reason that story interests me. About this time 14 years ago, I moved from a dairy farm in Ohio to the city of Goshen, Ind., and suddenly *I'm* the butt of the joke. And I'm not alone. Once a nation of predominantly small farmers and woodsmen, only 3.5 percent of us now make our living from farming. We Mennonites have left the countryside more slowly but no less surely. Immigrating, primarily as agricultural folk, by the 1940s a clear majority of General Conference Mennonites were still farming. Today nearly 75 percent of us are doing something else.

Who or what drove us off the farm? The principal culprit is education. My own congregation, Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen, is a city church in a college town. A congregation of educated rural refugees, we are a kind of living parable of the sociological exodus occurring among Mennonites. Throughout this century the theme song of the Mennonite crisis of identity has been, "How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm after they've seen Goshen College [or Bethel or Bluffton College or Indiana U]?"

But so what? So we are changing from a rural church to an urban and suburban church. Does that automatically mean we're in danger? In danger of becoming like the city-slicker in the story—knowing quite a lot but lost?

As we have moved from the warmth of the living land into what often feels at first like the sterile, artificial nature of cities, Mennonites have had difficulty knowing how to be God's people in urban areas. Transition always tests our fabric.

My answer to that question is *yes.* There are enormous dangers for us in town, and it will require spiritual energy, creativity and courage to be faithful congregations and a faithful church.

I'm not concerned here about things like quilts and shoofly pie, bonnets and peppernuts—things that have made the Mennonites a quaint sociological oddity. I'm talking about the things that have made us faithful in ways that the broader church needs to learn from and that God has entrusted to us to offer to a world where lostness has become a way of life. The view of church as a fellowship of disciples, our patterns of mutual aid, family and church life, our peace witness, our ethic of service, servanthood and simplicity—none of these are easily or automatically carried into town with us.

Historically urban settings have been good places for spawning radical ideas and ways of life and bad places for preserving them. For preservation you need to go rural. Menno Simons advised his rapidly growing body of converts, mostly urban, educated and bourgeois, to take to the countrysides, learn simple trades and live among humble folk. They took his advice and made a way of life across Northern Europe and Russia. Four hundred years later his spiritual descendants are moving back into town, and I believe the jury is still out as to whether the movement can survive.

I have these doubts because of dangers which face any group that makes the transition we're making. All of them are responses to the fear of being lost and at the same time are in themselves ways of being lost.

One danger is the retreat into fundamentalism. Faced for the first time with religious and moral pluralism, many people are driven from the adventure of faith into the safety of formula. We can tolerate only so much gray, and it is a comfort to be able to reduce everything to blacks and whites.

A second and opposite danger is simple accommodation. If we are diverse, if there are issues of faith and morality we don't agree on, then let's have a kind of gentleperson's agreement not to bring them up. If our children ask us questions and we can only give them multiple answers, well, that's the price we pay for pluralism.

A third danger is assimilation. I'm not talking about coming to look like everyone else in our social class; we've already done that. I'm talking about failing to draw from our own tradition in shaping our church style, to rethink in fresh ways how church might look in the city, and instead looking to Methodists and Presbyterians, who, after all, have been here longer.

A fourth way of being lost is materialism. This has always been a danger, but we have more money now, and the trinkets of our neighbors are more visible. Sooner or later, denying ourselves any of them when we can afford them begins to seem like heroic self-sacrificing, and we're no heroes.

A fifth kind of lostness is bureaucracy. In rural societies things like mutual aid and poor relief tend to be done informally and face to face. In town things are more complicated. Complicated matters require professionals; professionals require offices; offices require staff; all of which requires money and more professionals to raise and manage it. When the apostle Paul said that only three things abide—faith, hope and charity—it is clear that he never tried to dismantle bureaucracy.

One last danger we face is a widespread and important one, one that's hard to put your finger on. It's a kind of spiritual nostalgia. Many of us in these generations of transition harbor a dim, perhaps unconscious suspicion that our true spirituality is tied up in the land, in a certain style of church and family life that existed, if it ever existed, somewhere in our past. You can see how dangerous this can be. If our true spiritual identity is captive in some other time and place, then we won't seek it here and now. We resign ourselves to living in a state of compromise and spiritual mediocrity.

Those are six ways of being lost. As you might guess, I found them simply by looking inside myself. But what's next? Are the dangers I've just listed unavoidable? Is it inevitable that we will become lost? Of course not. For help, let's consider two New Testament passages: Acts 15 and 1 Corinthians 13.

Things haven't changed as much as we think. In every transition there are decisions: What do we take with us? What do we leave behind? What's essential and what isn't?

In Acts 15 we eavesdrop on the infant Christian church as it wrestled with its first and greatest transition. The idea was finally getting through to them: Apparently this thing that they had already begun to refer to as "the Good News of Jesus" was intended for everyone. Christianity was not going to be merely a Jewish reform movement; it was going to be the light of the world. It was an outrageous idea and it took several months and some rather spectacular demonstrations, attested to by no less an authority than Peter, to convince them that they had a crisis on their hands. Then into Jerusalem comes an upstart born-again Pharisee named Paul, with the word that converts were being made in alarming numbers in all sorts of pagan outposts.

It was time for transition and decision in Jerusalem. How do we tell these new pagan Christians how to behave?

With Jewish converts it was easy. They had the Law, which through centuries of refinement and expansion had pretty well wiped out the gray areas of life. It must have been tempting for them simply to take this whole, eager multitude of converts, circumcise them and start them at the beginning with Moses. You can read what they did instead. The speeches of Peter and James won the day. Instead of beginning with Moses they were to begin with Christ.

Beyond that the Jerusalem conference begged the question. They laid down a few rules to keep the converts from alienating the Jews of their communities. But the rest of the problem—the whole messy body of questions and issues and dilemmas—was placed, in God's great wisdom and to our great good fortune, into the lap of Paul.

In Paul we see the struggle that

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, \$14.50 U.S., \$16.50 Canada; two years, \$26 U.S., \$29 Canada; three years, \$35 U.S., \$39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Changes in our culture and our lifestyle always present challenges. These can result in loss or gain.

ought to engage our energies and priorities. What is it in all the changes, in all the clashes of cultures and values; what is it as we scan our history and survey our present; what is it as we look at the community and world community in which we find ourselves—what is it that is essential, that is at the heart of things, that we can build our lives around?

We're pretty good at deciding, often by default, what isn't essential. Apparently, for instance, we've decided that the wearing of plain clothes isn't essential or the wearing of coverings or the dramatic experience of conversion or the strict observance of the Sabbath. We're good at deciding non-essentials. But for someone who's lost, the problem isn't where he's been—he knows that. The problem is where to go next.

That was Paul's problem. He devoted his life to rooting out the essentials around which could grow the universal body of Christ. Try reading him again from that angle. For Paul the question was, If it isn't circumcision, if it isn't abstaining from sacrificial meat, if it isn't speaking in tongues, if it isn't the Law, then what is it at the center? Without presuming to summarize him, I offer 1 Corinthians 13 as one of the great focal points of his thinking. It comes at the climax of an epistle in which Paul has just waded through all of the issues just mentioned. For Paul, clearly at the heart of things is a quality of love, a quality born of the Spirit in each individual, suffusing the life of the congregation and reaching beyond. For Paul, the meaning of the cross, the central event of the Christian faith, is that it brings people together who ordinarily wouldn't be, not just to tolerate each other—as urbanites must tolerate one another to survive—but to live together and care for each other as a family.

Paul wasn't content just to write lovely hymns about love. He knew that love had to be spelled out in actions, and he often did the spelling. These two people should settle their differences; this congregation should give until it hurts. Spelling it out is our agenda. Our love must have a face and hands. When my wife and I came to Eighth Street Church, love had the face of people who genuinely cared about our children, who invited us and invited us again, who greeted us, who showed us they cared about issues of faith and life, who showed us ways to live, to love, to grieve, to go on.

Think what the faces and hands of love are for you. What are they for others you can think of? What might they be if we were more available and if our life together commanded a higher priority? And what difference does it make in the way I order my life and the way we order our congregational life that there are people, many people, who are suffering? The way we answer these questions will determine whether we will walk within our tradition or abandon it, whether we will stand with the powerful or the powerless, whether we will live in reaction to our past—or preserve it and market it like an antique quilt—or whether we will follow our Lord, who set his face toward Jerusalem. Then as now, "where cross the crowded ways of life" the cross must be planted.

Summary. I've tried to point out that we have been part of a great swing in the life of our church, that this transition has consequences that we may have overlooked: enormous danger of becoming lost as well as enormous opportunities for being faithful in ways that we couldn't be as a rural church. Being faithful may mean drawing from our radical roots to find new ways of putting faces and hands on the love of God. Love is the opposite of lost.

Let's return to that city-slicker I began with. Remember, he's one of us now, or at least he's our neighbor—we meet him every day.

"You Mennonites gave up a lot when you left the farm."

Yes, but we gained a lot too.

"You are giving up your cultural identity."

Yes, but we're working on a unified diversity—something Paul might have liked even better.

"You're not set apart. You're losing your distinctiveness."

Not really, but we're losing our isolation. We traded it for involvement and witness. And Jesus showed us that self-preservation isn't everything.

"Your children have too many options."

Yes, but we offer them the most important ones: a community that models integrity, that takes their choices seriously and that surrounds them with love as they make them.

"But you don't look like any Mennonite church I used to know."

Maybe not. But we ain't lost.

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Does God answer prayer?—Habakkuk 2:5-19

Thomas Finger

Elderly Japanese women—themselves survivors of the 1945 bombing of Nagasaki—pray during a special memorial service. God answers prayers, but our "waiting" often has to become "transformed." We do not naturally understand God's working.

At some time or another, most of today's Christians have wondered whether—or at least how—God answers prayer. Sometimes, however, we imagine that we raise such questions because we live in a modern, scientific age. Because ancient people did not know many things that we now can explain, we suppose that they must have been more superstitious and found it easier to think that God was speaking to them. We sometimes suppose that it is much harder for us who know so much more to believe that God hears and answers prayer.

It is true that we must deal with some issues that ancient people did not know. Nonetheless, questions of whether and how God answers prayer were raised by many biblical writers thousands of years ago. As the small book of Habakkuk well shows, they arise from the fundamental character of God, of reality and of prayer.

Such questions often arise when people experience things that seem to contradict what they previously believed. Habakkuk deeply believed that God was holy and just. Yet this seemed to contradict the fact that God allowed violence and injustice to go on all around. And so Habakkuk asked God why this was so and wondered why God took so long to answer (Habakkuk 1:1-4).

When God's answer finally came, it raised even harder questions. For God was going to punish injustice in Judah by letting the Babylonians conquer it (1:5-11). Yet the Babylonians seemed even more unjust; the thought that the holy God might use such unholy means contradicted Habakkuk's beliefs even more sharply (1:12-17). Nevertheless, just when confusion might have overwhelmed the prophet, he decided to wait once again for an answer (2:1). This time God assured him that although unjust people might seem to triumph for a while, those who kept on walking faithfully with God would experience true life (2:4).

The remainder of chapter 2 shows that once Habakkuk began exercising this fundamental attitude of faithful waiting he began to understand more about how God exercises justice. In verses 5-19 the prophet pronounces six judgments on those who live by oppressing others. They are compared to or condemned as drunkards (2:5), creditors (2:6-8), violent builders of houses (2:9-11) and cities (2:12-14), those who make others drunk (2:15-17) and idolaters (2:18-19).

One principle runs throughout the passage. Those who oppress others become insatiably greedy (2:5). They cannot stop amassing wealth, power and to subject peoples. Eventually, however, they will overreach themselves and this process will turn against them. Eventually those they oppress will have had enough and will rise up and pay them back in kind (2:8, 17). In the end, then, the Babylonians will be punished by their victims.

Through the prophet, all who raise the questions that Habakkuk did can learn that God has not abandoned history. Instead God judges oppressors through factors present within the historical process. Eventually violence and injustice produce a counter reaction, and those who have used them fall victim to the same (2:16).

Such an answer, of course, will not answer all questions that victims of oppression may ask. If I or my loved ones are robbed or killed, it may bring little comfort to know that those who do such things usually get paid back. On the other hand, the assurance that God does something about injustice is far better than the fear that God is simply silent when the wicked "swallow up" the righteous (1:13). Moreover, there is a certain fittingness to such judgments. God does not punish arbitrarily but lets people reap the consequences of their acts.

In conclusion Habakkuk shows us that questions as to whether and how God answers prayer arise in every age. They arise because people are always experiencing things which seem to contradict their previous beliefs. Habakkuk shows us that when this happens we need not ignore or suppress our questions. Neither need we let them overwhelm us and destroy our faith. Instead we can take our questions and confusion to God and persistently ask for answers.

Yet if we do so, we must allow God to answer however and whenever he will. If we keep on being open, God will eventually grant us some light. God's answers may be quite different than we expected, and many things that we might like to know might remain obscure. *Fourth in a series on Habakkuk*

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Thoughts on a new baby

Richard McSorley

We went to the hospital to visit Elenore, my niece, the mother of a new baby. She was not expecting us but gave a big smile of welcome as she saw me. "Uncle Dick, what a nice surprise! I was not expecting you." Her smile showed not only her welcome but her joy.

I had seen her a week earlier. She was facing the birth of her fourth child. She had the ordinary anxiety of any woman going down into the valley of death but also the memory of the difficulty she had had with a previous birth. Now all that was past. The words of Jesus came to mind, "A woman in labor has sorrow, but when her child is born, she no longer remembers the sorrow for joy that a child is born into the world."

"How is the baby?" I asked.

"Wonderful. He is the most wonderful baby in the world. You can go right around the corner and see him in the nursery."

We went to the nursery window. "Which one is he?" I asked Linda, another niece. Near us behind the glass were seven bassinet-carts, each with a transparent plastic shield around it. Inside were seven infants, all wrapped in little blankets, all lying on their sides. Only their heads were visible. All about the same size, all sleeping.

"There he is," said Linda.

"How do you know?"

"There is the name card tied to the side of the crib." There it was, sure enough, "David Saukaitis." That name separated him from the others. But how alike they all were in this nursery and in all the nurseries of the world.

As we watched, a nurse came over to one of the carts, looked at the name, then wheeled the cart over to a table. She uncovered the infant's foot, lifted it a bit and began to rub it with a swab of cotton. "What's she doing?" I asked Linda.

"She is going to draw blood." As Linda spoke, the child began to scream. We couldn't hear the scream, but we could see the child opening its mouth and writhing in pain. We could also see David and the other infants waken, open their eyes, move a bit, then slowly go back to sleep. They had heard their first cry of pain from another human being. How many more would they hear? How much would those cries disturb their lives?

As you see new babies being born into today's world, what are your thoughts? Will they live full lives? Will nuclear holocaust cut their lives short?

We went back to David's mother. As we entered, there was a nicely dressed young man standing by the other bed in her room. "Uncle Dick, this is Mr. Kelly, the father of a new baby girl." I shook hands and congratulated him. A moment later a nurse wheeled a crib into our room, she lifted the infant out and handed her to Mr. Kelly, her father. As the father kissed the child, the mother, all dressed and ready to go, walked into the room followed by another nurse pushing a wheelchair. "All new mothers are taken to their car in a wheelchair," my niece whispered to me.

I stepped over and congratulated Mrs. Kelly and gave a blessing to their new baby. Mrs. Kelly sat in the wheelchair and the nurse handed her the infant. "Do we have everything that belongs to us?" she asked her husband. "That little blanket on the bed is ours, I think." The nurse wheeled mother and child from the room. The husband followed.

In the normal course of life, that child should live till 2056, but the child faces an uncertain future. Will that child live to be 70? As I reflected on the kind of world into which she was entering, a world holding 50,000 nuclear warheads, a world in which the superpowers race to make more and more bombs, I wondered, What are a mother's thoughts as she looks to the future in this nuclear age? Surely she hopes that her child will live, we will care enough about human life that we will stop the mad race to nuclear catastrophe. In this way her new baby, the only new thing under the sun, becomes a symbol of hope to the new mother. Her child is also a symbol of hope for all of us, because that child is one of us now. If that child has a chance to live in peace, all of us will have the same chance.

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In the name of Christ

Rick Cornelsen

The hall is dark, the music deafening, and the dance floor virtually empty. An MCC volunteer sits against one wall tapping his feet to the heavy metal anthem "Bang Your Head" while the bodies of young people parade by him, acting out scenes reminiscent of their home lives. Boys "manhandle" girls. Girls solicit the violent attention which brings with it a sense of belonging. All share in the frenzy (or numbness) of intoxication—though few, if any, have been drinking. The youth worker feels a bizarre contentment in having found the place where he smugly thinks that Jesus would be.

Dances in Nain are for waiting. Few people dance and most will claim to be bored. But any suggestion that fewer dances be held at the Youth Centre are met with desperate opposition. Dances are important times of waiting for someone or something to come and transport the participants out of their hellish present. Not that Nain is a hot place or an ugly place—it is quite the opposite. However, the young Inuit and Settler people have been torn from any viable way of *living* in this place. And they see little immediate hope of repairing the ties to *meaning*. So they wait.

On this particular evening the waiting is falsely paid off by the arrival of a young woman, drunk and in a frenzy. She will be the evening's vehicle for escape even though she mirrors the reality of Nain intensely. She begins by howling lamentations of a lost love—the father of her child who bears nothing more than the stigma of having, at 17, a boy named after him. She shrieks admissions of fear that she will lose her child to "them" for being a bad mother. Then, as if rehearsed, her verbal hatred is poured onto her parents for creating her. Finally, in prophetic drunkenness she turns to the nearest symbol of white southern Canadian oppression (the MCC worker) and loudly proclaims his greatest fear—that he has no right to be there.

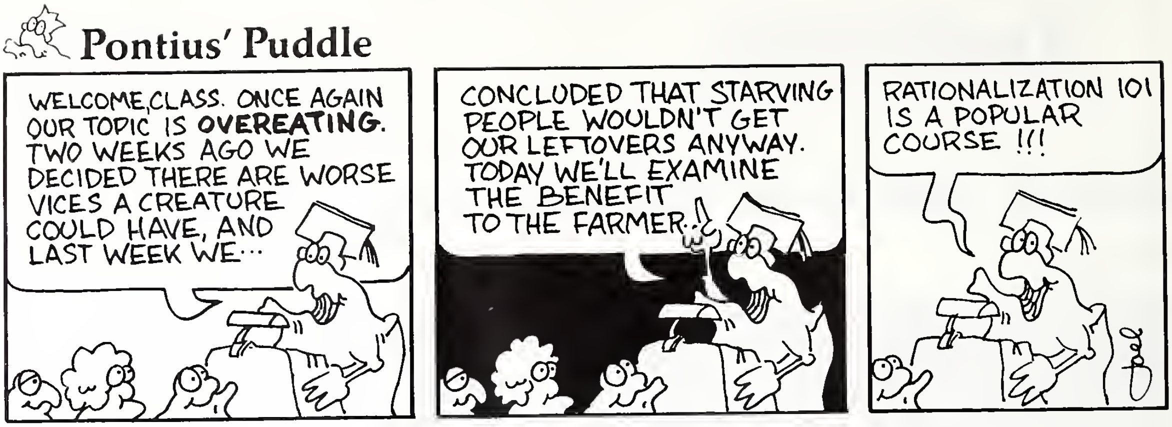
Later, long after the hall is closed, the MCC worker answers his door in paisley pajamas to listen to a string of near-sober apologies: "Did I hurt you? . . . I hope your glasses aren't broken. . . . My madness made me do it. . . . It's all just dumb talk, you know."

Unfortunately, he does not know that it's all dumb talk. He is, in fact, beginning to understand that he has no right to be there, that he represents a society that has created the conditions under which a traditional lifestyle is virtually impossible to pursue and at the same time has made entrance into even the lowest levels of a new way of living extremely difficult. He understands that he represents people who play the cash game with sometimes ill-equipped native people and almost always win—entrepreneurs who sell overpriced, substandard and/or inappropriate products, and bartenders who trade huge quantities of liquor for food money while their patrons regularly freeze to death on their crooked ways home.

Slowly it dawns on the MCC volunteer that he and others like him are experiencing a great privilege. They have been given yet another chance by the infinitely patient people of the "true north, strong and free" to show that their intentions are sometimes good. Similarly they have been given another opportunity to glimpse and acknowledge the miracles that God is working in the lives of people caught in this beautiful ghetto. The youth worker's sense of wonder turns from the real social ills to the equally real and miraculous images of young people choosing life where suicide is common, rejecting alcohol and drugs where escape is a necessity, and pursuing meaningful activity where welfare does its best to kill motivation.

Rick Cornelsen, Box 216, Nain, Labrador A0P 1L0, serves MCC Canada as a youth worker with the Moravian Church. It is a pioneering project. Rick's wife, Dori, is working with a crafts center in the community.

Nain is a beautiful spot in nature. But while its beauty is great, so are the challenges.


Pontius' Puddle
WELCOME, CLASS. ONCE AGAIN OUR TOPIC IS OVEREATING. TWO WEEKS AGO WE DECIDED THERE ARE WORSE VICES A CREATURE COULD HAVE, AND LAST WEEK WE...
CONCLUDED THAT STARVING PEOPLE WOULDN'T GET OUR LEFTOVERS ANYWAY. TODAY WE'LL EXAMINE THE BENEFIT TO THE FARMER...
RATIONALIZATION 101 IS A POPULAR COURSE !!!

NEWS

U.S. Congress sends Africa funds to Central America

Famine aid changed to war aid

Washington (MCC U.S.)—The U.S. Congress added $300 million in "economic" aid to four Central American countries to ensure a package that would garner the votes needed in the recently passed $100 million military aid bill requested by the President for the Nicaraguan rebels, or contras.

Little known to the larger public, $225 million of the $300 million was taken from special reserve funds earmarked for Africa famine relief. Senator John Melcher (D-Mont.) offered an amendment to stop this raid of famine relief money, but his effort was voted down.

The four Central American countries—El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Costa Rica—already receive 16 times as much U.S. aid per capita as do African countries. While reports in recent months have given the impression that Africa's famine needs have abated, nearly 18 million Africans still depend on food aid for their survival, according to the United Nations Office of Emergency.

Southern Sudan, for example, where Mennonite Central Committee is present, is currently in the grip of civil war, famine and population dislocation that could equal the disaster that struck Ethiopia in 1984. The lives of 2 million people are threatened by starvation. It is for just such emergencies that the $225 million Africa famine relief fund was intended but will now not be available.

Bread for the World, MCC and other church bodies expressed opposition to the use of African famine funds to advance U.S. political objectives in Central America. But the tactical device in Congress came too late for the churches to have an effective voice.

The $300 million part of the broader contra aid bill was designated "Economic Support Funds" (ESF). But the history of ESF allocations has shown that such appropriations are by definition ill-defined and are often used for military-related objectives, not beneficial to needy people.

Bread for the World has noted, "Many consider the aid ($300 million) to be little more than an effort to gain acquiescence of the four (Central American) countries in supporting U.S. funding for the contra war."

Thus in one vote, funds to feed hungry children in Africa were transferred to finance war in Central America.
Delton Franz

Women in Somalia receive food distributed through Mennonite Central Committee.

"Churches as institutions have been slow to speak and to act" in the AIDS crisis, charges a recently released report of a consultation on "AIDS and the Churches" sponsored by the World Council of Churches, held June 26-29 in Geneva, Switzerland. Eighteen physicians, theologians, ethicists and clergy from Africa, Europe and the Americas took part in the event. The report says that AIDS "challenges the churches to break their own hearts, to repent of inactivity and rigid moralisms." AIDS "challenges our fears and exclusions and tests whether Christians are faithful to the teachings of Christ."

"We work for Christ with carrots, oranges and bananas," says Alice Brouwer, who with her husband, Foppe, give pastoral leadership to the First Mennonite Church of Hope at Fennell Bay, Australia, the only organized Mennonite congregation in the South Pacific. The Brouwers attend a big produce market each week at the nearby city of Newcastle. Filling orders from their neighbors, they buy fruits and vegetables, then resell the food at cost, with a modest markup for their expenses. "Through this we befriend people," the Brouwers say. "Friendship evangelism works better here than mass evangelism."

Mennonites had a unique chance to work with the Coptic Orthodox Church this summer. Mennonite Central Committee workers Bev and Rick Binder of Vancouver had special workshops for engaged and young married couples as part of three weekend retreats held in Beni Suef, 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Cairo, Egypt. The retreats focused on marriage, family and sexuality, topics generally avoided in conservative Arab society.

Carla Reimer appointed editor of news service

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Carla M. Reimer, Newton, Kan., has been named editor of the General Conference Mennonite Church news service, effective Oct. 1.

"I'm excited about being a part of an organization that strives to live Christ's message," says Reimer. "I feel the position of news service editor is a dynamic one, fresh with possibilities."

Since 1984 she has been director of public information at Bethel Deaconess Hospital here, where her work included editing the quarterly *In the Service of the King.*

Reimer is a 1984 graduate of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., majoring in English with a communications emphasis. She edited the college newspaper and served a communications internship with her new employer. Between her sophomore and junior years she worked in Kansas City, Kan., for Mennonite Voluntary Service.

With her family, in the 1970s, Reimer spent three years in India attending Woodstock School. Prior to that she lived in Rosthern, Sask., and attended Rosthern Mennonite Church. She is married to Nathan Dick, and they attend Tabor Mennonite Church in rural Newton.

Program director wanted

Camp Friedenswald needs a program director, a part-time salaried position with main responsibilities during January and February weekends and June and July. Ideal for students.

For more information contact:
Curt Bechler
Camp Friedenswald
15406 Watercress Drive
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(616) 476-2426.

Church health worker killed by contras in Nicaragua

Managua, Nicaragua (MCC)—Nestor Antonio Castilblanco, his two brothers and a brother-in-law were abducted by contra guerrillas from their home the evening of July 31.

The four men were tortured for several hours and then killed by the guerrillas, reports Mennonite Central Committee worker Ann Hershberger, who interviewed the men's four widows soon after the killing.

Castilblanco was a health leader trained by Provadenic, the health arm of CEPAD, the Nicaraguan evangelical relief and development organization. He worked for six years for CEPAD in child nutrition and immunizations.

MCC sends material aid to war victims through CEPAD and provides funding for CEPAD's rural development program.

The other three men were members of a local health committee involved with promoting family vegetable gardens. One brother was an agricultural technician also working with CEPAD.

The four men had a total of 12 children, the youngest born less than a day before her father was murdered.

Hershberger wrote, "I could scarcely stand to listen as Nestor's wife told how he called to bring the children and lift them up to his face for a goodbye kiss before he was led away. She tried to follow, but the contra and her husband told her to go back. Nestor said, 'I won't return, you must go take care of the children now.' "

The contras robbed the families of their household goods, clothes and even their family photos. They also burned one of the houses.

Hershberger reports that the four men were found the next day castrated with their eyes gouged out and abdomens cut open. She says these are "all trademarks of contra assassinations."

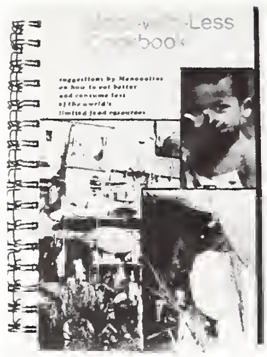
Hershberger adds, "Listening to these stories fills me with anger as we wait for the Senate to approve the $100 million in aid to the contras. When that aid reaches the contras, how many more children will have to say good-bye to their fathers in this manner?"

Congress passed the measure giving $100 million in military aid to the contras.

Mennonite singles

Did you know
- that there is now a service named Crossroads to introduce Mennonite singles to each other?
- that already there are many members, some of whom may be just the friends you've been hoping for?
- that word of Crossroads has been printed in the *Gospel Herald*, *The Mennonite*, *The Mennonite Reporter* and the MBCM memo to pastors?
- that only Mennonite publications carry word about Crossroads, giving all members a bond?

Find out how Crossroads could enrich your life by sending for information to:
Crossroads
Box 32
North Tonawanda, NY 14120.



The More-with-Less Cookbook got a new cover (see left). Michio Ohno of Japan put the book face down on a vinyl tablecloth. The cover stuck to the vinyl and a part of it peeled off. Ohno found a brochure from a travel agent, cut out pictures and pasted them onto the damaged cover. Doris Longacre's last book, *Living More-with-Less*, is being translated by two Japanese women and will be published this fall with contributions from Japanese Christians.

Nearly a decade after the first ecumenical Charismatic Conference in Kansas City, Mo., more than 85,000 delegates from 30 denominations and Christian groups are expected at two anniversary congresses in New Orleans. More than 10,000 Christian leaders—denominational executives, pastors, educators, prayer group leaders and others—are expected Oct. 8-11 in the Superdome for the New Orleans '86 Leaders' Congress. The July 1987 general congress on the "Holy Spirit and World Evangelization" will be the anniversary event of the 1977 Charismatic Conference. Planners expect more than 75,000 delegates.

General Board discusses capital campaign, proration

Kansas City, Mo. (GCMC)—The General Conference Mennonite Church's General Board met at the St. Paul School of Theology here Aug. 27-30 to discuss the new fund drive and other conference programs.

With the approval by delegates at the July 21-27 triennial sessions of a fund drive as part of a three-year development plan, a campaign committee met for the first time on Aug. 26 to make plans (see story, p. 425).

During the campaign committee's report to General Board, Peter Kehler raised the concern that the General Conference will pursue the fourth of the four calls to kingdom commitment passed as part of the development plan (the fund drive) but ignore the first two, which refer to spiritual renewal and service and leadership. Development director Carol Suter said the committee had recommended that General Board convene a spiritual emphasis committee that would provide resources to congregations on how to carry out these calls. The board agreed and referred action to the executive committee, which is now selecting a committee.

GB member Ivorie Lowe expressed concern about the makeup of the campaign committee, that it included no minorities and only two women. "It's one more example," she said, "of minorities not being included from the beginning in a decision-making role."

Proration. Every three years the General Board decides how the income is prorated among the three program commissions and the seminary. A new element under consideration this time was a recommendation by the Division of Administration to record budget figures in $U.S. currency. Previously budget figures had been mixed. With the new system currency fluctuations will affect all commissions equally, and the amounts will more accurately reflect the purchasing power of each, said conference treasurer Ted Stuckey.

During the discussion of proration, Lynn Liechty reported that a person said to him that "until we have a full-time staff person working in evangelism the General Conference will not be seen as being serious about it."

Peter Kehler said that evangelism has increased in the churches, thanks largely to the work of the Commission on Home Ministries in promoting it. Jake Fransen pointed out, however, that people aren't perceiving the fact that growth is happening.

According to Dottie Janzen, "quiet Mennonites" want help in doing evangelism themselves.

No decision was made to hire someone immediately in evangelism.

Elaine Rich wanted $114,000 added to the budget so that a children's worker and adult education worker could be present under the Commission on Education, but no formal request was made.

As for proration, a resolution to keep the percentages as they are passed with two abstentions. Those percentages of the total ($U.S.) budget are as follows: Commission on Education—8.3 percent, Commission on Home Ministries—18.8 percent, Commission on Overseas Mission—64 percent, Mennonite Biblical Seminary—8.9 percent.

The Division of Administration also recommended a 2 percent increase in the budget for 1987. This passed.

Personnel. The General Board also passed a resolution that DA establish a personnel policy committee, with one member from the General Board. This committee will review personnel procedures and is expected to complete its work by March 1987.

At Saskatoon the General Board passed a resolution to "support a process of reviewing the COE termination of Randy and Myrna Krehbiel and seeking reconciliation." How to implement that resolution turned into a lengthy discussion.

Development director Carol Suter, an attorney, counseled caution to the board about how they proceed so that they don't violate a mediation agreement made between the Krehbiels and two members of the Commission on Education in April. Several board members expressed concern about possible lawsuits.

J. Winfield Fretz, interim executive secretary for COE, said he did not like the legalistic turn of the conversation. Though a suit is always a possibility, he said, he didn't think it was a probability in this instance.

After much debate about wording, the board adopted this statement: "The General Board instructs [GC president] Ken Bauman, [general secretary] Vern Preheim and [COE chairperson] Erick Sawatzky to arrange to review the process used in the termination of Randy and Myrna Krehbiel for the purpose of creating termination and grievance procedures."

Afterward Anna Juhnke said that although she supports the GB action, as an individual she feels what COE did was wrong, that by not talking about the Krehbiel termination COE was participating in a kind of cover-up.

COE member Ben Sprunger said the issue could be debated, but there wasn't time.

In other business the General Board heard reports from the commissions and seminary, appointed people to various committees and discussed more specifically the four goals adopted by the conference at Saskatoon: evangelism, teaching biblical principles, developing leadership and seeking Christian unity. *Gordon Houser*

The issue of land distribution has reached a critical point in Brazil. Landless farmers, impatient with years of unmet promises of just land redistribution, have taken initiative. Some have invaded large land holdings, hoping to claim a plot for their own use. Others have organized a "movement of the landless," setting up 43 makeshift camps for landless farmers eager to occupy land. Brazil's new civilian government promised to work on land rights. The Brazilian Mennonite organization for social services, AMAS, and Mennonite Central Committee look for ways to work at resettlement of landless farmers.

Four previously unemployed Vietnam veterans are learning home construction skills in southeastern Kentucky with the hope of gaining permanent employment. Two of the veterans are coal miners who lost their jobs to machines in the mines. "One of them has been off for five years and the other three," reports Mennonite Central Committee U.S. worker Jerry Gingerich, who is the director of HOMES, the non-profit home repair and construction organization that has employed the four. The veterans, ages 49, 40, 40 and 39, are all married and have families.

The St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship enjoyed a rare opportunity to meet some Soviet citizens when a delegation from the Soviet Union came to St. Louis as part of the Mississippi Peace Cruise Aug. 2-3. Three Soviet participants were invited by the fellowship's peace witness committee to share the day with them on Aug. 3. After the regular morning worship service, there was an exchange of gifts, a potluck and the Soviets talked informally about their lives and work.

Campaign committee plans $17.5 million drive

Kansas City, Mo. (GCMC)—Assigned the task of planning a $17.5 million above-budget fund drive approved in July by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 14 members of a 16-member campaign committee met here Aug. 26-27, at the Don W. Holter Center for Renewal on the campus of St. Paul School of Theology. The fund drive is only one aspect of an overall development plan for renewing and revitalizing the denomination. The complete plan is called "A Call to Kingdom Commitments."

Representatives appointed by each of five U.S. districts and five Canadian provinces, plus representatives at large form the campaign committee, which elected Willis Sommer, Central District representative from Bluffton, Ohio, as chairman. Al Heer, Pacific District representative from Paso Robles, Calif., was elected vice chairman, and Ruth Unrau from North Newton, Kan., representing Women in Mission, was elected recording secretary.

Other committee members present were David Bartow, Zionsville, Pa. (Eastern District); Aaron Glanzer, Salem, S.D. (Northern District); Donald Schmidt, Newton, Kan. (Western District); Bob Schmidt, Langley, B.C. (British Columbia); Merlin Stauffer, Calgary (Alberta); John R. Dyck, Rosthern, Sask. (Saskatchewan); George Ens, Winkler, Man. (General Conference); Gerd Bartel, Delta, B.C. (Conference of Mennonites in Canada); David Olfert, Winnipeg (Conference of Mennonites in Canada); Jake Fransen, Smithville, Ont. (General Conference); and Joan Wiebe, Aurora, Colo. (General Conference). Unable to attend were Edwin Teichroew, Winnipeg (Manitoba) and Bill Goerz, St. Catharines, Ont. (Ontario).

Carol Suter, GC development director, was pleased with how well the group worked together. She said, "I am delighted with the makeup of the campaign committee. We could not have found better representatives if we'd tried."

Chairman Willis Sommer commented, "I am excited about what the development plan can help make happen in the General Conference and related conferences, both in terms of spiritual renewal and program."

And David Bartow noted, "So much of our energy goes into keeping existing programs going that it is hard to be open to new areas of mission. I feel that the development plan has given us the opportunity to do that. I have high hopes that the fund will enable us to implement the planning that has been done."

The committee was joined by staff members of the General Conference from the United States and Canada, including newly appointed congregational campaign director James Gingerich, Moundridge, Kan., and Mark Weidner, Bluffton, Ohio, who will serve as regional director for the Eastern United States. Gingerich will also be western U.S. regional director. A Canadian director has yet to be appointed.

James Gingerich, Moundridge, Kan., was appointed campaign director.

The group reviewed plans for promoting and carrying out the upcoming campaign and spent considerable time deciding how to pare down an original project list costing nearly $20 million to a list that met the $17.5 million limit approved by delegates to the triennial session of the conference held in Saskatoon in July.

For further planning, four working groups were also formed, covering advanced gifts, congregational campaigns, communications and fund management.

The campaign committee recommended that a spiritual emphasis committee be formed to promote other aspects of the total plan, which also calls for renewal through prayer, Christian service and support of the four conference goals. Members will be asked to make commitments to prayer, service and financial support on commitment Sunday, April 12, 1987, in their home congregations.

Committee and staff ended their sessions with prayer. The four working committees will each meet again separately this fall. *Dave Linscheid*

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Mennonite Central Committee has purchased 1,300 metric tons of wheat from the Indian government. This wheat will be distributed through food-for-work projects of CASA, an ecumenical body of 21 Indian churches and a long-time partner of MCC. Monsoon rains have failed the past two years in India and over 100 million people in 11 states face a "famine of catastrophic proportions," CASA director J. K. Michael reports. "For millions of women in the country the day begins and ends with the endless struggle for water."

Suzanne Zerger, a sophomore at Bluffton (Ohio) College, was awarded first place in the 1986 C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest. Zerger's speech, titled "Break the Chains," appealed for reconciliation and repentance as goals of the criminal justice system, rather than vengeance and punishment. Tara O'Neill, a student at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., took second with an oration on television violence. The third-place winner was Donita Wiebe of Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute, for a speech on the meaning of pacifism.

World Evangelical Fellowship held its eighth General Assembly in Singapore June 22-27. WEF is an association of 56 national and continent-wide evangelical fellowships and alliances. In January the WEF Executive Council Working Group decided to move the WEF international office to Singapore. The target date is January 1987, if approval is granted by the Singapore government. Delegates to the General Assembly overwhelmingly approved a 38-page document entitled "A Contemporary Evangelical Perspective on Roman Catholicism." Delegates also issued resolutions regarding religious liberty in Vietnam and Greece.

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calendar

Canada

Oct. 18—Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan joint delegate session regarding Swift Current Bible Institute, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at SCBI

Nov. 21-22—Bible conference at Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College with Erland Waltner as guest speaker; theme: a New Testament study to incorporate the theme "Principles of Biblical Interpretation"

Feb. 27-28, 1987—Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan annual sessions at North Battleford

ministers

Harlen de Brun, formerly with Commission on Overseas Mission in Lesotho, has accepted the pastorate at the Indian Valley Church in Harleysville, Pa., beginning this month.

Frank Ewert is serving as interim pastor at Alsen (N.D.) Church.

Paul Isaak resigned as pastor at Menno Church, Ritzville, Wash., effective Jan. 31, 1987.

David Manning began Aug. 31 as pastor at Friedensberg Church, Avon, S.D.

Jay McCall has accepted the pastoral position at Peace Church, Portland, Ore.

Audrey Irene Mierau was installed as pastor May 1 at Harrow (Ont.) United Mennonite Church.

Donald Peter Penner and *Beverly Suderman* were installed as assistant pastors Aug. 1 at Vineland (Ont.) United Mennonite Church.

Cay Siebert and *Keith Harder* are serving as joint interim pastors at First Church, Hillsboro, Kan.

Dennis Siebert has accepted the call to serve as pastor at Butterfield (Minn.) Church.

Bernard J. Thiessen, formerly with COM in Japan, will be interim pastor at Salem Church, Freeman, S.D., until March 1, when Ron Krehbiel will begin as pastor.

Frank Willems is serving as interim pastor at Prescott (Ariz.) Church.

workers

Gertrude Bergen, Bethel Church, Winnipeg, was commissioned Aug. 31 for a one-year term in Zaire under the auspices of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. She will teach the children of Commission on Overseas Mission/AIMM missionaries Arnold and Grace Harder.

Janna Brandt, Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term Sept. 1 as a senior visitation worker in St. Catharines, Ont. Her parents are Leona and Loren Brandt of Goessel, Kan.

Betty Caldwell, South Bend (Ind.) First Church of the Nazarene, began a two-year MVS term May 31 as a childcare worker at Community Mennonite Day Care Center in Markham, Ill. She received an associate degree in nursing from Southwestern Michigan College in Dowagiac. Her parents are Georgeanna and William Caldwell of South Bend.

Jillian Derksen, Foothills Church, Calgary, began a one-year MVS term Aug. 15 as a prevocation trainer at the Dale Rogers Training Center in Oklahoma City. Her parents are Linda and Henry Derksen of Calgary.

Bergen

Brandt

Caldwell

Derksen

Doug and *Marilyn Dyck*, Oriole Park Missionary Church, Red Deer, Alta., began two-year MVS terms Aug. 1 as home care assistants at Community Care Services in Reedley, Calif. Their three children, Dwayne, Shelly and Philip, will accompany them. His mother is Sarah Dyck of Clearbrook, B.C. Her parents are Betty and Henry Loewen of Clearbrook.

Brian Dyck, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, began a two-year MVS term July 1 as office secretary/coordinator for Physicians for Social Responsibility in Kansas City, Kan. He recieved a bachelor's degree in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and bachelor's degree in religion/history from the University of Winnipeg. His parents are Edna and

Over 200 Christians from over 15 countries met in Braunfels, West Germany, June 19-22 to consider how the church in Europe can become a peace church. In the keynote address Hildegard Goss-Mayr of the Fellowship of Reconciliation said, "We who belong to the historic peace churches or pacifist groups and movements must constantly ask, Does the flame of Jesus' non-violent love still burn as intensely in us as it did in the founders of our movements? They were convinced that if we are not prepared to sow seeds in tears we will not be able to reap with joy. Don't we sometimes rather rest on our 'tradition'? "

Ten Mennonite youth and their sponsors traveled to New Orleans for the July 4 weekend. Donna Detweiler, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. unit leader there, reports that they pulled weeds, painted, ate rice and beans and did without air conditioning. Now the Felicity Methodist Church yard, where soup kitchen lines form, is clean. Olayeelah Daste's dark apartment glows with fresh antique white. Sunday morning the group worshiped with the newly formed Hispanic Mennonite group there called Amor Viviente.

"I have had a yearning to serve," says Jenny VonGunten of Riverton, Man. She and Brenda Niebuhr of Vancouver spent the summer in Japan in short-term service with General Conference missionaries. Their "overseas mother," Mary Derksen, adds, "We have been deeply touched by their desire to serve the Lord here. They have left a positive witness in our city [Beppu], even though they couldn't communicate in the language."

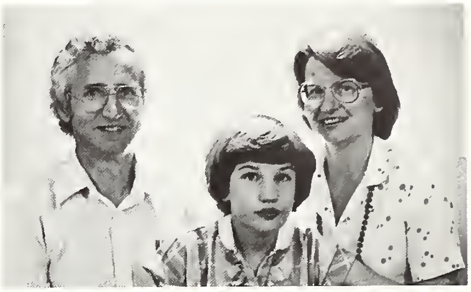
RECORD

D. Dyck

M. Dyck

L. Fenton

W. Fenton


Penners

B. Dyck

Epp

Hansen

Jantzi

George Dyck of Newton, Kan.

Kathleen Epp, Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MVS term Aug. 23 as a child-care worker at the Sunshine Day Care Center in Liberal, Kan. Her parents are Clarence and Louise Epp of Saskatoon.

Lois and *Walter Fenton*, Pea Ridge Mennonite Church, Palmyra, Mo., began two-year MVS terms Aug. 1 as staff person and maintenance worker at Pleasant Valley Outdoor Center in Woodstock, Ill. They have six children.

Brad Hansen, First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Carlisle, Pa., began a two-year MVS term Aug. 1 as an office assistant for the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors in San Francisco. His parents are Edwin and Martha Hansen of Carlisle.

Joy and *Philip Hofer*, Akron (Pa.) Church, will begin four-year Mennonite Central Committee terms in the Philippines in April 1987. They will be serving as MCC country representatives. Joy received a bachelor's degree in English from Wheaton (Ill.) College. Philip received a bachelor's degree in communications from Fresno (Calif.) Pacific College and a master's degree in communications from California State University in Fresno. They have two children, Jeremy and Emily. Her parents are John and Josephine Hayward of Reedley, Calif. His are Egon and Naomi Hofer of Dinuba, Calif.

C. Nelson and *Esther Hostetter* of Akron, Pa., retired Aug. 8 from MCC, completing a combined total of about 30 years of service with MCC. Nelson served as executive director of Mennonite Disaster Service since 1971. Esther served with SELFHELP Crafts since 1972.

Donna Jantzi, St. Agatha Mennonite Church, Boden, Ont., began a one-year MVS term June 9 as a child-care worker at the Beatrice (Neb.) Day Care Center. Her parents are Lucille and William Jantzi of Petersbury, Ont.

Irma and *Peter Penner*, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, and Arnaud (Man.) Church, have begun two-year MCCC terms in St. John's, Newfoundland. They are community development workers with the Newfoundland Association for Community Living and MCCC representatives in Newfoundland. Peter received a doctoral degree in biochemistry from Queen's University in Kingston, Ont. Their children are Teresa and Yvonne. Irma's mother is Olga Wiens of Winnipeg. Peter's mother is Katarina Penner of Winnipeg.

Mark Sprunger, Bethel College Church, North Newton, Kan., began a two-year MCC term with SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa. He received a bachelor's degree in business and industrial arts from Bethel College. His parents are Hugh and Janet Sprunger of Kowloon City, Hong Kong.

Mennonite Ministries and Southern Africa

Noting that to a significant degree there is a shared purpose and history in the work of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee in Southern Africa, it seems right that the comments below be made jointly by the three agencies.

1. Mennonites first came to Southern Africa out of a desire to know more about and to engage in ministries of witness, service and reconciliation in the context of apartheid. As entry into South Africa itself has consistently been made difficult for Mennonites by the South African government, programs have been established in the surrounding countries of Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana. More recently Mennonite workers have been placed in Transkei, an "independent" South African "homeland" or "bantustan." While these programs have inevitably broadened our perspectives and have resulted in new foci of attention, the South African apartheid system continues to be an inevitable frame of reference for all Southern Africa Mennonite activity. All states in Southern Africa are politically and economically linked to the power of the Republic of South Africa.

2. Apartheid is a system of legalized separation of races practiced by South Africa's white minority government against the country's black, mixed race and Asian majority. While the South African government has recently implemented some substantive changes within the apartheid system, it has not yet publicly repudiated its fundamental policy of separation of the races. We join the large majority of South African Christians in asserting that apartheid is sin and incompatible with the Christian gospel.

3. The South African conflict is extremely complex. We as North American Mennonite/Brethren in Christ organizations do not have a long history there. For many of us, because of our socioeconomic class, historical experience as a people and our lack of easy access to South Africa, understanding the struggle of both black and white South Africans is especially difficult. As a result we feel it is particularly important that Mennonite workers listen and relate to South Africans from a broad variety of backgrounds. . . .

4. As North American church organizations it is important for us to relate as partners to the churches in Southern Africa. As a result Mennonite agencies in Southern Africa engage in a variety of ministries under the auspices of national councils of churches as well as those of individual denominations and congregations, including African independent churches. These relationships inform our program direction in the region. . . .

5. Mennonite workers in Southern Africa long for a peaceful, non-violent end to apartheid. It is our belief that all human conflict, including apartheid, is ultimately rooted in selfishness and sin. Efforts to achieve reconciliation which exclude calls to repentance and submission to the power of Christ cannot but fall short of their objectives. We recognize that there has been a long history of non-violent resistance to apartheid by both black and white South Africans, and Mennonites have been supportive of such groups and individuals. But in South Africa, as in every other country where Mennonite/Brethren in Christ mission and service agencies are involved, Mennonite workers relate closely to and come to love and respect Christians and others who are deeply concerned about injustice and oppression but who do not share the Anabaptist commitment to non-violence. . . .

6. North American Mennonites ask the question of violence/non-violence in a particularly personal way; i.e. how will I or will I not participate in a violent act or activity? Black South Africans encounter the issue of violence/non-violence from another perspective—namely that of being victims of violence on a daily basis. Where they live, work, go to school, shop, eat, is determined by coercion, by violent laws and violent enforcement. Before Mennonites can with any credibility share something of our convictions regarding non-violence in South Africa, it is imperative that we understand as fully as possible how black South Africans experience the violence of apartheid. . . .

7. Mennonites, if we are faithful to Christ, are likely to be misunderstood in South Africa. We believe that the example of Christ will lead us to be less concerned about how we are perceived by Pretoria or by the revolutionary movements and more concerned about whether we are standing with the hurt and suffering. It is important to remember that Jesus also was widely misunderstood in his time.

8. As administrators of Mennonite/Brethren in Christ mission and service organizations working in Southern Africa, some of us have chosen to write to leaders of our governments expressing concerns about policies toward South Africa. At times some of us have chosen to encourage sanctions or divestment, at times we have written to South African government leaders expressing concern over detentions or other policies, or to South African church leaders expressing our support and encouragement. However, we resist the call from both "right" and "left" to take organizational policy positions on South Africa. Rather we encourage our workers to incarnate Christian love and a longing for justice in the diversity of situations in which they find themselves and to share with North American sisters and brothers the insights and convictions on specific issues which they gain from such service.

9. Because we claim allegiance to the God of all history rather than to a national god, and because we believe that the church is the universal community of people of the kingdom of God, the suffering of human beings in South Africa is a necessary focus of our love and concern. North Americans are called upon to inform themselves about the South African situation, to reject the simplistic interpretations of the conflict which try to put it primarily in the context of East/West struggles and to identify and respond to ways by which North American governments and corporations may be participating in support for apartheid.

10. While the above comments reflect our understandings of the current situation, we look ahead to the equally critical time which will follow the dismantling of apartheid. We commit ourselves to continue the process of listening and learning from the people of Southern Africa, as well as the discussion among ourselves, in an ongoing effort to discern our role for that time. We seek the guidance of the Spirit for understanding, wisdom and enablement to be God's people in that context as well as now.

Calling on Menno

Along with the Lord, we do not want the death of sinners but that they repent and live. Jesus lays on us the duty to correct sinners. Now I know that some do not regard homosexuality as a sin but as a problem area (July 8 issue). That is why Isaiah says to those who twist everything around to make the worse appear the better cause, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil" (5:20). In chapter one he has already told us in vivid language how people are hurting. But instead of accepting the cleansing of God (1:18) they continue to live a life of sin and piety which is most offensive to God.

Jesus reflects the same view in Matthew 7:21ff: "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter. . . ."

The Anabaptists applied the rule of Christ according to Matthew 18 in a twofold way. The first part, which we often overlook, pronounces a woe upon those who cause people to sin (18:6ff). It also speaks against an over-glorification of the body, as found in our sexuality study, when it advises us to cut off the offending members and thus to enter life instead of being "thrown into the fire of hell."

Menno also speaks of wickedness "far exceeding Sodom and Gomorrah, where all manner of sexual perversion is practiced, as it is in Spain and Italy and in the cloisters . . . where the most high, blessed, and precious name of God is sadly blasphemed. . ." (p. 196). Leviticus 18:21; Romans 1:21-32; 1 Corinthians 5:9-11; 6:9-19; 1 Timothy 1:10f; 2 Peter 2 and Jude all speak to this issue of sin. *David Janzen, Box 594, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0* Aug. 14

Heartfelt concern

I do not currently attend a General Conference Mennonite Church, but I grew up in one and still have a heartfelt concern and sympathy for it and its troubles. One that has surfaced is how to handle the insistence of some people that Mennonite churches accept without hesitation one who is a practicing homosexual.

I am glad that the vote on the statement concerning sexuality was upheld at the conference in Saskatoon, reaffirming the traditional, biblical view. But I am also disturbed by a high—nearly 20 percent—vote of dissent. It is true that if we follow the pattern of God's and Menno Simon's teaching on forgiveness, we certainly must be forgiving if the sinning person admits to sinning and is repentant. But those who defend homosexual practices are arrogantly insisting that the church body is sinning against them if they do not fully accept those who have homosexual "preferences." They are saying in the same breath that the apostle Paul and Moses did not receive their inspiration from God the Creator when writing the epistles to the Romans, Corinthians and Ephesians and the book of Leviticus in which homosexual practices are roundly condemned. It seems that it is not well understood by these people why God condemns anything. It is because God is interested in our best welfare and warns us about what is not good for us. Homosexual practices are not good for us. . . (see Romans 1:24-26, RSV).

Admittedly, not even godly people always experience all the blessings of a heterogeneous marriage. But with reliance on the grace of God, even with difficult handicaps, most can find true fulfillment. But those who insist on continuing in sinful practices of any kind have chosen a path of disappointment and eventual destruction. (For the extended list of such sins, read the preceding and following verses to the quoted text.) Those who continue without remorse are "given up" by God. . . .

Much or all of the blessing which God the Creator has built into the marriage relationship and into the personality of a man and a woman by creation, is missed by the practicing homosexual. The lack of desire for the "normal" God-given blessings is regrettable and in my opinion is a large share of the "penalty" spoken of in Romans 1:26. Oh yes, dishonoring of the body is also mentioned, but by far the greater loss is that of the normal family experience in which a man becomes a father and a woman becomes a mother—the family being a picture of what the triune God is like in love and activity within the Godhead. That is why homosexual practices are wrong—they are a slap in the face of the great Creator. Even if ungodly society condones any sin, society is rebelling against the good that was intended for it by a gracious and giving God. That is why all sinfulness is wrong; it denies that God knew what he was doing when he created the universe and placed mankind on this earth. He provided a model in himself for us to follow. . . . *"G. Nichol," Box 611, Newton, KS 67114* Aug. 15

Forgiveness a virtue

The editorial in the last *Mennonite* (Aug. 12 issue) was wonderful. It surely will make working together a joy when such forgiveness is present and will be a guide for future conduct that could disrupt working together. I thank the Lord and the work of the Holy Spirit that brought this about. Forgiveness is such a necessary and priceless virtue. I'm sure your editorial will cause many a soul to look into their own lives to make peace.

On my last visit to my doctor I was told, "It's time to get your affairs in order." Sobering words. However, they were not a complete surprise to me, but they do bring about emotions among which and foremost is the entrance to eternal life. That hope sustains me. Thus far I live without pain or discomfort, except for being weak. The Lord has given me a clear mind and I daily thank him for it. I hope that others will be encouraged to live a day at a time, committing all to the Lord. This hope of eternal life makes our days here on earth a time of reflection, a time of thanksgiving and praise on the loving way the Lord has led us. *Otto D. Becker, Aberdeen, Idaho 83210* Aug. 18

The loneliness of pastors

"Your Pastor Needs You" (Aug. 26 issue) struck a sensitive chord deep within me as I'm increasingly becoming aware of the loneliness of this profession/position.

I listen and nurture, then listen and nurture some more. You're right on in stating that few people will talk to pastors about their personal well-being. Few get beyond the polite and functional, "How are you?" I need someone to give loving counsel and to just listen. I need a shoulder to cry on.

I also feel keenly the burden of distance from family. I feel that every time my neighbors have a family barbecue in their backyard.

I'm curious about the identity of one who would write so sensitively and astutely. Surely he or she is a pastor or spouse/relative of one. I hope many will read—and some heed—that article and not think that it's for pastors only. *Anonymous by request* Aug. 22

What was accomplished?

I am curious about what the delegates in Saskatoon hoped to accomplish with their resolution on sexuality. Was it to eventually develop political initiatives, outlawing those forms of behavior they say are sinful? That would seem the logical extension of any attempt to determine a public position on what should be a private issue. Or was their goal to influence, with their greater wisdom, those of us who do not share their beliefs? That hardly seems likely, because I must question the wisdom of anyone who feels that homosexuality and premarital sex are the most urgent issues facing the world and the church today.

The only likely result I can see of the resolution on sexuality is to force out of the church those who thought that the Mennonites were a people of compassion, steadfastly opposed to such impositions onto private right, regardless of whether they were enforced by gun or by resolution. *David Esau, 109 S. Estelle, #6, Wichita, KS 67211*

Aug. 22

Shooting our wounded

A church leader from another denomination recently said, "The church is very good at shooting its own wounded." That is what happened at Saskatoon. No amount of talk about "compassion" and "pain" on the part of those voting in favor of the resolution on the human sexuality statement can alter the truth of that quotation as it applies to the consequences of that conference action. *Willard and Ruth Linscheid, Box 333, North Newton, KS 67117*

Aug. 23

Reader asks for help

I am an inmate here at the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory. I have been here for almost two years. . . . I have been reading *The Mennonite*, and I enjoyed the Aug. 26 issue the most. I would like to know if I could begin getting *The Mennonite.*

Also I would like to correspond with your church. I am trying to live a Christian life now and I would like help from your church. I am 24, single and have no children. . . .

May God bless each of you, keep you in his loving and caring arms forever because Jesus Christ is coming soon. *Billy Ashford, #40682, KSIR, Box 1568 A3-233, Hutchinson, KS 67504-1568*

Aug. 27

Editor's note: Contributions from readers have made it possible for us to provide subscriptions to The Mennonite *to prison inmates. If you would like to add to this ministry, send designated gifts to us at Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Jesus included his mother

One wonders why the picture of a sculpture of Jesus as a woman was brought about (see May 27 issue). Could one feel left out? Then take a look at John 19:26-30. Jesus took full note of his mother's aching heart. . . . He has a disciple care for her. She is fully cared for, in no way left out. According to John this is the last thing Jesus took care of before the cry "It is finished." There is no way we can improve on it. . . . *Willard Becker, Box 462, Freeman, SD 57029*

Aug. 27

Contend and pray

To how many in our churches or in a conference of delegates would Jesus have to say, as he did to Nicodemus, "Art thou a master in Israel—Anabaptist Israel, if you will—and knowest not these things?" What things? The scriptural teaching and the spiritual and practical applications of the time-consuming issues at the General Conference and in recent issues of *The Mennonite*: homosexuality and the issue of Jesus being portrayed as a female. This *should* elicit "violent contention" as referred to in one letter, for God tells us to "contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Delivered how? Via God's Word, the Bible. Despite God's command to "study the Scriptures" (2 Timothy 2:15), there seems to be an abysmal ignorance of God's Word among most average Christians. (It must be added here, however, that one cannot help but be amazed at the scriptural knowledge of some. Despite the numerous times I have read through the Bible, I must confess a lamentable lack of knowledge of God's Word.) But in reference to the "historical fact" regarding how Jesus looked, we have more than "historical fact" regarding his sex, and that is God's Word (John 3:16; John 8:35; Matthew 22:42; Matthew 17:5).

Hence, to picture or present Christ as a female—probably even to defend this issue—is rank heresy, according to the dictionary: "belief different from the accepted belief of the church."

Of course, we must continue to love the heretics, including the homosexuals, but what does the church do to combat such heresy? Thankfully a giant step was achieved at the triennial sessions with the adoption of the sexuality resolution. But what can or does the church do about the schismatics? One effective course is available to all born-again Christians: Prayer changes things. . . . God can work miracles. "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:12). *C. B. Friesen, 415 E. First St., Newton, KS 67114*

Aug. 27

Emphasize Jesus

To the hymnal committee revising our songbook: According to reports you are making some significant changes from our present *Mennonite Hymnal.* Jesus Christ's blood was shed and he was crucified on a cross, but it was Jesus who endured this, and he should be recognized as our Savior. It is not the blood or the cross, as some hymns say. I trust you will carefully consider this in your revision. *E. R. Moser, Route 2, Road 2 17849, Bluffton, OH 45817*

Aug. 27

'Let him without sin . . .'

Many of Christ's teachings were devoted to changing religious concepts of sexuality. He dealt mainly with a despised and misused group, women. The contemporary religious leaders continually cited the law of Moses as judgment; that law often used stoning as punishment. Christ invariably refuted that law, instead advocating loving acceptance and asking that only the sinless cast judgment and stones.

As I read the letters in *The Mennonite* and hear conference reports, I find that the Mennonite church is singling out two groups to be stoned, the still-despised women and gay people. I find it sad that a church born through being stoned has turned the tables and is doing the same to people whom it doesn't understand or agree with.

A sculpture has been chosen as a focus to define womanhood. . . . In doing so, God has also been defined in

LETTERS

those same terms, as God embodies both sexes.

The conference statement has judged gay people and condemned them, setting them apart to be stoned—hardly Christ's way of handling the issue. I understand that the conference devoted a great deal of time to that statement, in doing so projecting gay people into a false role of great danger to society. I find that very disturbing.

The Mennonite church has officially been unable to deal with or even formulate clear statements about these devastating policies [obliteration of the family farm, South African or Palestinian crises, South and Central America]. It is more interested in how people perform the sex act or whether a person's gender determines ability of clear thought or definite leadership abilities. Can it be that the Mennonite church has become one of those institutions devoted to the devastation of "undesirable" individuals?

Is the Mennonite church at all relevant as the 20th century closes? Or would Christ be overturning the conference tables and driving out the delegates with a whip? *Norman J. Epp, 313 E. Ninth St., Newton, KS 67114*

Aug. 27

Draft update

I just read the June 30 letter of David Ortman in the Aug. 26 issue. Here's an update: As of this date (Aug. 28) there is a doubt that these awful regulations will actually stay intact.

The House Appropriations Committee is currently trying to have these recent (May 14) changes in the Selective Service laws nullified. As of last report, the bill, which would nullify the regulations, was passed to the House Rules Committee to make sure that this was a legal course of action. Once the bill is approved it will move to the full House, where opposition of the nullification is expected. The bill, HR 5313 ("HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations bill for 1978") should come up for a vote sometime in September.

Those concerned with the rights of conscientious objectors should contact their representatives to insure that the provision that nullifies the Selective Service regulation remains intact. *Greg Sommers, Midwest Committee for Military Counseling, Inc., 421 S. Wabash Ave., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60605-1208*

Aug. 28

Editor's note: For more details, see The Mennonite, *Sept. 9, p. 398.*

FILM

Rite of passage

Stand By Me, *a Rob Reiner film directed by Rob Reiner, written by Raynold Gideon and Bruce A. Evans, produced by Bruce A. Evans, Raynold Gideon and Andrew Scheinman*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, assistant editor

In many cultures young men enter adulthood at age 12. A certain childhood innocence and ignorance is left behind, and a hardness develops as one approaches the harsh realities of the world. *Stand By Me* shows this rite of passage for four 12-year-old boys in a small Oregon town in 1959.

These four cover a spectrum of sorts—a smarty, a hood, a fatty and a four-eyes. They hit on each other, insult each other's mothers, fight and make up—the things boys do with friends.

One day Vern, the fat kid who's least likely to hide his fear, tells the others he has overheard his brother talk about finding the body of a boy who was hit by a train and has been missing for three days. The four decide to hike the 20 or so miles along the railroad tracks to find the body.

Along the way come many adventures, and we learn something about these boys' families, all of whom have problems. Most is revealed about Gordy, the smart kid who is telling the story years later as a writer. His older brother, who was idolized by his parents, died in an accident four months earlier, and the parents ignore Gordy or tell him he doesn't measure up to his brother. The portrayal of this situation is the weakest part of the film because it is so overdone. The gap between the kids and the adult world is magnified to such an extreme that it calls into question the realistic feel of the other parts of the film.

This realism is strong, due to the authentic set, the script with its many allusions to gestures and vocabulary of that period (12-year-olds' fascination with taboo language is abundantly evident), and some fine acting by the young actors.

Stand by Me follows closely a story by Stephen King, who usually writes in the horror genre. It's a poignant film on a subject rarely treated, and rarely treated this well.

Coming next month: *The Mennonite* on cassette tape

It is something new under the sun! Our church paper will be available on cassette tape beginning with the Oct. 28 issue.

Volunteer readers in the Newton, Kan., area are being coordinated by Martha F. Graber. They will get as much as they can of each issue onto one 90-minute tape.

A 2½-month trial period (to the end of 1986) will tell us how much demand there is. Add your name and address. Send to Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

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☐ Yes, I want to sample one cassette tape of *The Mennonite* for $6 (U.S. or Canadian).

☐ Yes, I want to receive the next five issues of *The Mennonite* on cassette tape, beginning with the Oct. 28 issue. Enclosed is $25 for five tapes.

☐ I will likely become a regular subscriber to *The Mennonite* on tape.

I'd rather die

Verda J. Glick

Roberto Medina's (not his real name) heart thudded under his military uniform. "Lord, help me," he breathed. His footsteps echoed in the empty corridor.

What would the lieutenant say about his non-resistant convictions? Would he call him a coward, a woman, a chicken? Would he accuse him of sympathizing with the guerrillas?

Roberto's battalion had come as replacements for slain soldiers to a town surrounded by guerrillas. It was one of the most dangerous assignments in El Salvador. Roberto knew the army had denied discharges to others. His release would take a miracle.

"Lord, help me," he pleaded again as he approached his superior's office. "Give me the right words."

Hesitating at the open door, he saw the uniformed man at his desk. The handsome, middle-aged man looked up. Roberto saluted.

"Come in, Medina," boomed the lieutenant. "What can I do for you?"

"Sir," Roberto said, "I'd like to speak with you when you have time, please."

"Certainly. Have a seat. I have time now. What is it?"

"Lieutenant," Roberto began, "I want to be frank and tell you the truth. I don't want to continue in the military."

"What?" exclaimed the officer. "Why?"

"Well, sir, when I was home on leave, I became a Christian. As I see it, it's not right for me as a Christian to carry a gun or go out to battle."

"Don't you like the army?"

"Well," Roberto paused, "I can say I enjoyed a sense of satisfaction in being able to help defend my country. But you see, sir, I have a greater satisfaction now—to serve my Lord."

"But that's no problem. The authorities are set up by God. Isn't that so?"

"Yes sir." Roberto swallowed. "That's true, but I feel it's not appropriate for me to be here now. It's of no use to wear a uniform or carry a gun. If the guerrillas attack us, I'd rather die than kill. My life's been changed." He hesitated. "Sir, I believe you can help me."

"So then, what do you want?"

"I'd like you to help me get a discharge."

"Look. I understand your situation. But you know very well that I don't give discharges." He cleared his throat. "Well, maybe in this case. . . ." He stood up. "Go fill out a discharge application. I'll sign it and send it in."

"Oh Lieutenant, thank you." Roberto could hardly believe it. He had expected mockery, accusations, even imprisonment. Instead he had met only kindness and consideration.

Still, in the next days Roberto felt troubled. After five years of military discipline, he could hardly imagine disobeying orders. What if he were called to combat?

One morning the call rang through the barracks, "Get ready for action. The guerrillas are stopping traffic and recruiting young men by force. Everybody line up."

Roberto obeyed, praying for guidance.

"Medina," ordered the sergeant, "stay and answer the phone. Everyone else, out."

While the rest chased guerrillas, Roberto thanked God for his exemption from combat duty.

Days later, the lieutenant asked Roberto, "Medina, what's wrong?"

"Sir," answered Roberto, "I don't feel right here. My conscience bothers me. Besides, my church is having special meetings and I'd like to go."

"But Medina, you know the dangers. Those guerrillas can recognize a soldier even when he's not in uniform. If they stop the truck you're on, they'll kill you."

"It's of no use for me to wear a uniform or carry a gun. . . . I'd rather die than kill."

"I know, Lieutenant, but God can protect me."

"When's your next leave?"

"In 19 days."

The lieutenant bellowed, "Sergeant!"

"At your orders, sir." The sergeant saluted.

"Change Medina's leave for day after tomorrow." Turning to Roberto, he ordered, "Leave Wednesday. You can go to church three nights. Return Saturday. Your discharge should come soon after that."

The meetings at the Mennonite church encouraged Roberto. The evangelist, an ex-policeman, understood Roberto's struggles. Biblical messages, gospel singing and warm fellowship nourished the new Christian's soul.

All too soon Saturday came. Roberto prayed for protection as he climbed onto a truck to return to the base.

As the pickup bounced along the lonely, mountainous road, Roberto marveled at the change God had made in his life. Wondering at his freedom from fear, he whistled a hymn.

Suddenly, an armed man stepped out from behind a thorn bush. The truck stopped short. Roberto caught his breath. The pale, thin guerrilla asked the driver, "Hey, have you seen the 'dogs'?"

"No, there's nothing."

"Well, excuse us," he said to the passengers. "We've stopped you to ask for a contribution. You know how we suffer. We need your help."

While the guerrilla took the collection, Roberto glanced over his shoulder. Two more guerrillas stood about 50 feet away. One nudged the other and pointed at Roberto. The other nodded, then tried to get the attention of the one taking the collection.

"May we go now?" asked the driver.

"Yes, go ahead. Thanks for your help."

As the truck started away, the nearest guerrilla suddenly noticed Roberto. His mouth dropped open. Narrowing his eyes, he raised his hand. Too late. The truck disappeared around the bend.

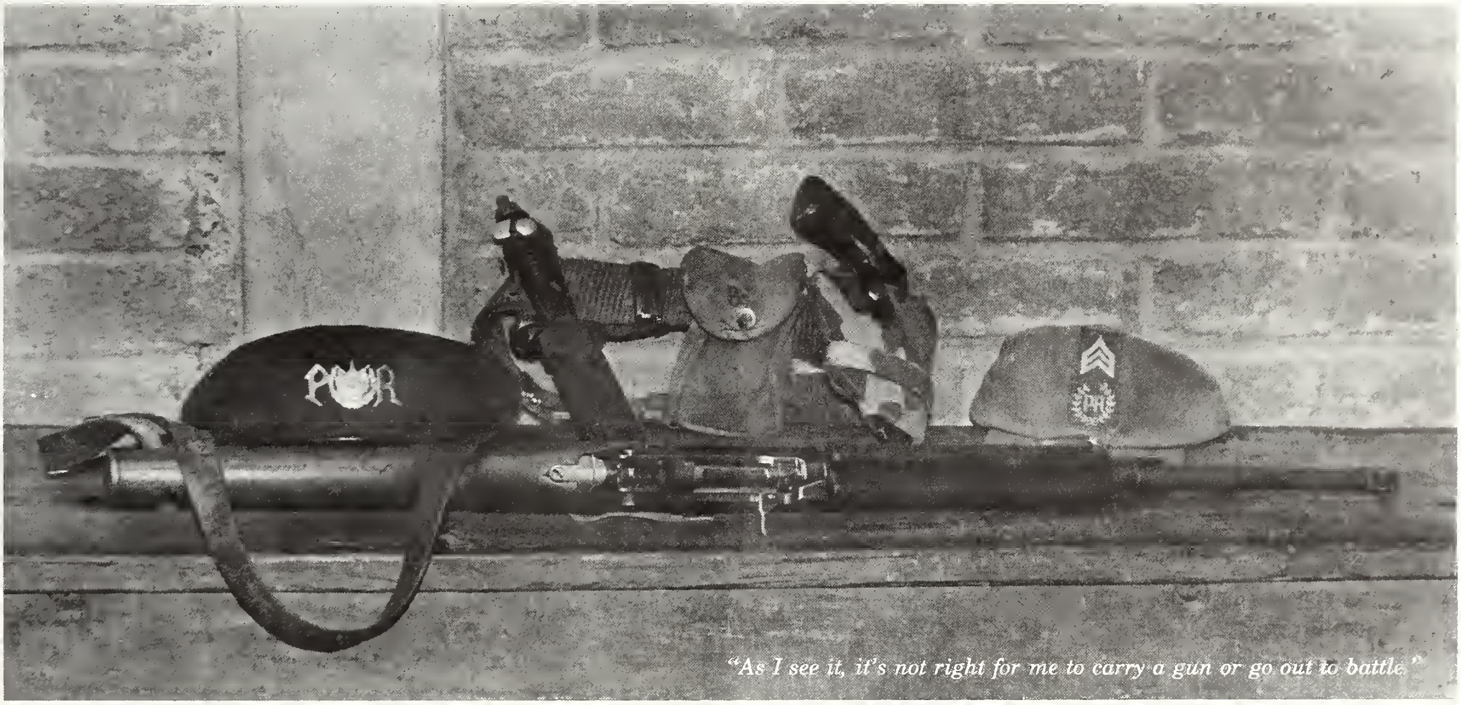
All the passengers expressed their relief at once. One woman sank onto her market basket.

"Did you see those guerrillas looking at you?" she gasped. "Thank God they didn't notice you in time."

"Yes, thank God," echoed Roberto. He gripped the side of the truck to steady himself. He knew he had experienced a miracle.

Back at the barracks, life continued as usual, except that whenever the battalion left for combat, Roberto's superiors ordered him to stay at the base.

One morning a sergeant called, "Medina!"


"As I see it, it's not right for me to carry a gun or go out to battle."

Roberto jumped up from a game of checkers. "At your orders, sir."

"Gather up your gear."

"Sir?"

"Gather up your things. You're discharged."

Roberto felt like floating. Discharged. He could leave.

As he hurried down the corridor to thank the lieutenant, he remembered the prayer he had prayed 29 days earlier. Now he prayed again, but this time it was a prayer of thanksgiving.

Epilogue: After Roberto's discharge, guerrillas attacked the town, killing many soldiers. Roberto recently received baptism in the Mennonite church.

Verda J. Glick, Apartado Postal 1929, Santa Ana, El Salvador, Central America, shares a true story.

In debt to our children

Calvin Redekop

Bumper stickers are a way of life in the United States and Canada today. You can get a good education regarding our value system, although I have not yet seen a college catalog offer a course entitled "Culture 101—Bumper Stickers." One that has caused me to smile is usually stuck on a recreational vehicle and says, "We are enjoying our children's inheritance." My sons can't see it nearly as funny as I do.

It seems through the centuries parents have developed a deep concern to provide for the welfare of their offspring and thus express some guilt when they enjoy themselves. Conversely, most offspring expect an inheritance when their parents age and die.

One of the most poignant and meaningful of the New Testament parables is of the prodigal son. And though many sermons have tried to downgrade the financial aspects of the parable, very few deal with its underlying substance—the mutual responsibilities of parents and children which can lead to alienation, prodigality, lostness and then forgiveness.

Parents do owe their children a home that is a model of moral and ethical living, intellectually stimulating and emotionally encouraging and supporting. This is quite an obligation and it may be expecting too much.

Assuming we are committed to the idea of providing our children with the above, what do parents owe their children in a financial way? I have not seen any treatise on this specific topic. Basically I think that is because (1) it is a private matter; (2) parents assume it normal to give all they have to their children; (3) it is disruptive to family relations to discuss this type of issue; and (4) if it were openly discussed, the church or other agencies might raise some questions about the matter.

Here is my view of what I believe should be the practice. (1) We owe our children an adequate preparation for life. To teach a son how to fish is more lasting than giving him a dollar for a hamburger. We owe our children the education both informally and formally that will enable them to exploit their opportunities and abilities to make a living. Of course, there are variations in this schema, and all able-bodied children should do their reasonable share in paying for an education. I served as a night watchman at a laundry in Goshen for two years and as a grease monkey at Goshen Baking for two years, and I benefited from it. But my father supplied all the support I could not earn myself, even though he was not wealthy.

2. We owe our children assistance to help them get established in a business, profession or career. Most people can make it on their own, but expecting a child to have to skimp and scrape while parents are well off is not charitable, nor gratifying to a child. There is no hard rule to be applied here, but parents and children should come to an agreement on the type and amount of help there should be.

3. We owe our children assistance and backing when things go wrong. We will remember when we were in that kind of situation, and it was a reassuring feeling that when parents help, one is not alone. (Parents-in-law are included in this discussion of parental help to children.)

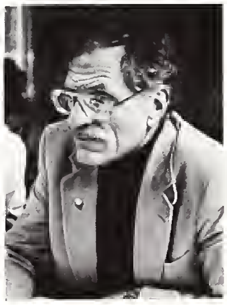
4. We do not owe our children the major part of our estate, at least not from what I read in the New Testament. The prodigal son story should not be construed to teach that a father is obligated to give his son his percentage of the farm, business or whatever. The purpose that Jesus had in telling the parable lies elsewhere. I spoke to the reasons for not passing an estate on to the children in the article "Carving up the Estate" (Feb. 15, 1983, issue).

If children demand or expect their share of the estate, the greatest debt has been withheld from the children, i.e. the obligation of helping them to understand the privileges of an estate.

5. We owe our children a continuing debt of discussing and sharing as to the goals of our living, why we are trying to accumulate resources and what should be done with them. My impression is that this debt remains largely unpaid in most families. Few children really know why parents accumulate and what will be done with the estate. They know enough to assume that they will receive "their share."

What debt do we owe our children?

My family came through the Depression quite impoverished. But I remember my mother's hard work and her repeated hope that the farm would eke out enough that her children could all get a college education or its equivalent in order to make their way in the world. She died early and did not see her children get established as she had hoped. But I feel good about my parents. They owed me, most of all, open sharing about what they felt they owed me and how they felt they could help me. I believe this they "paid in full." I dare to think my three sons will be able to say the same.



Calvin Redekop is professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

MEDITATION

Let's pray now

". . . and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:66).

"We really should pray for her," I told my husband. We had just learned that trouble faced a friend of ours again. Since we were almost ready for evening devotions, I assumed we would pray for her after reading Bible stories.

Our 3-year-old son John had been listening intently to our conversation. Since we often stopped to pray immediately to thank God or to ask for guidance in other situations, John must have been confused by the present delay. Deep in thought, he slowly left the room, then soon returned. His eyes were full of concern as he said urgently, "Mommy, let's pray for her right now. Let's pray that prayer that is above my bed," referring to the framed embroidery on the wall of his room.

"Sure, let's pray your prayer," I answered, not actually convinced that the child's bedtime prayer was really appropriate for the current situation.

I had embroidered that prayer for John before he was born. It actually represented many prayers, for as I stitched, my thoughts often focused on the unborn child within me. I prayed for the little one's health, for a safe delivery, for wisdom as a mother and for the child's future.

Little did I know how special that embroidered prayer would become to our son. It was his, and he prayed it every night after we read Bible stories. John had his own style of praying. He believed in "making a joyful noise unto the Lord." Singing as nicely as he could, John's rendition of the age-old prayer became an embellished cantata, displaying his full voice range in happy praise.

That night, however, no music swelled from John's heart as he climbed onto my lap, only sincere concern for someone he did not even know. I suddenly realized the significance of our son's childhood wisdom. Certainly that simple yet eloquent prayer was appropriate, perhaps more than any other words my husband or I could have prayed. Perhaps our troubled friend needed peace of mind just to fall asleep at night. Maybe her soul was restless from years of turbulence. Maybe she needed the safety of God's protection. I believed the sunlight of God's love could break through again for her.

The three of us spoke the prayer together:

"Now I lay me down
to sleep.
I pray, Thee, Lord,
my soul to keep.
Guide me safely
through the night.
Wake me with the
morning light.
Amen."

Cynthia Goerzen

CONTENTS

One of the great tragedies in our time is the havoc created by alcohol. Alcohol can be an invaluable medicinal resource when properly used. All too often it is abused. Then it becomes a deadly killer.

Hopefully the candid look at alcohol in this issue will lead us to think and pray and act. Other articles in this issue can help us to know how to act. Let's use the best of our heritage wisely, creatively and aggressively. That is probably the best remedy.

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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EDITORIAL

Nine beauties to Jerusalem

This editorial began June 8 in Jerusalem. I had walked along about half of the wall around the Old City. Because I was by myself and had no deadline to meet, I had taken time to stop and to gaze around. Now I was back at the hotel, reading. One article has been nudging me ever since. The writer said that in creation God distributed 10 beauties to the world—*nine of them to Jerusalem.*

During my days in Jerusalem I spent many hours trying to become familiar with the Holy City. Each day I also read major portions of the Gospels. My hotel was located opposite the Damascus Gate. I attended worship on Sunday, June 8, at the Garden Tomb. At one point I sat down opposite the place called "hill of the skull—Golgotha" and meditated there for a couple of hours.

Is the writer correct? Did God bless Jerusalem in a special way? If so, what is that beauty?

Israel is a desert turning into a garden. Incredible achievements are seen everywhere. Where only three years ago I had seen parts of Jerusalem in ruins, now there are modern buildings. And the architecture has the appearance of an "appropriate technology"—it fits the landscape.

Israel is a proud place. The people refer readily to 1948, the birthday of today's Israel, and speak of their "young country." They see themselves as strong and alert. In spite of terrorism that has kept many people in the United States and Canada from leaving the continent this summer, the Israelis repeatedly told me, "You are in the safest country in the world." A popular T-shirt and billboard slogan shouted, "Don't worry, America. Israel is behind you." My attention was also repeatedly called to the sky, where the sounds of jets, helicopters and other reconnaissance aircraft were rarely more than minutes apart. And on the streets it was impossible to walk in crowded Jerusalem without constantly seeing weapons slung over the shoulders of people.

In spite of local assurances, one day a terrorist bomb exploded in a grocery store only two blocks from where I stayed. No one was killed, but several women were injured.

There are special qualities at Jerusalem.

That hill with its uncanny appearance of a skull—whether or not it is the "real thing" told about in the Bible—can dig deeply into your being. Right below it is a bus parking lot. You can't sit in its immediate vicinity opposite without noticing a lot of activity—lots of noise and many people. Above it looms the face of Calvary.

As I sat there, my mind moved from 1986 Jerusalem to the place of "The Skull" in Luke 23. Jesus was crucified in the midst of everyday life, not far from the marketplace. Life in Jerusalem was hardly interrupted by the Son of God dying on the cross. Just like today.

Then my mind moved to the tomb. That too is debated whether this is the "real thing." But there it stands—empty. I couldn't help it; tears came to my eyes. What if you and I were to visit the tomb (grave) of our most beloved and find it empty? What if I should go back to where my son's ashes lie buried and discover that the place was open and vacant?

When I finally got up, I walked back to the Garden Tomb, entered it and just stood there a while. Somehow that became a soothing balm for my troubled soul. Inside of me I could feel the music of resurrection—life and faith.

For me the biggest beauty is in the drama that unfolded here as recorded in the Bible. God came among us as one of us. That incarnation feels more real in the place where it began. God identified with us to the point of making himself utterly vulnerable. He gave of himself through his only begotten Son. That Son died. He rose from the tomb. He lives today.

Yes, God gave nine beauties to Jerusalem. In Christ he passes them all on to us who are willing to receive them. It's worth the visit. *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

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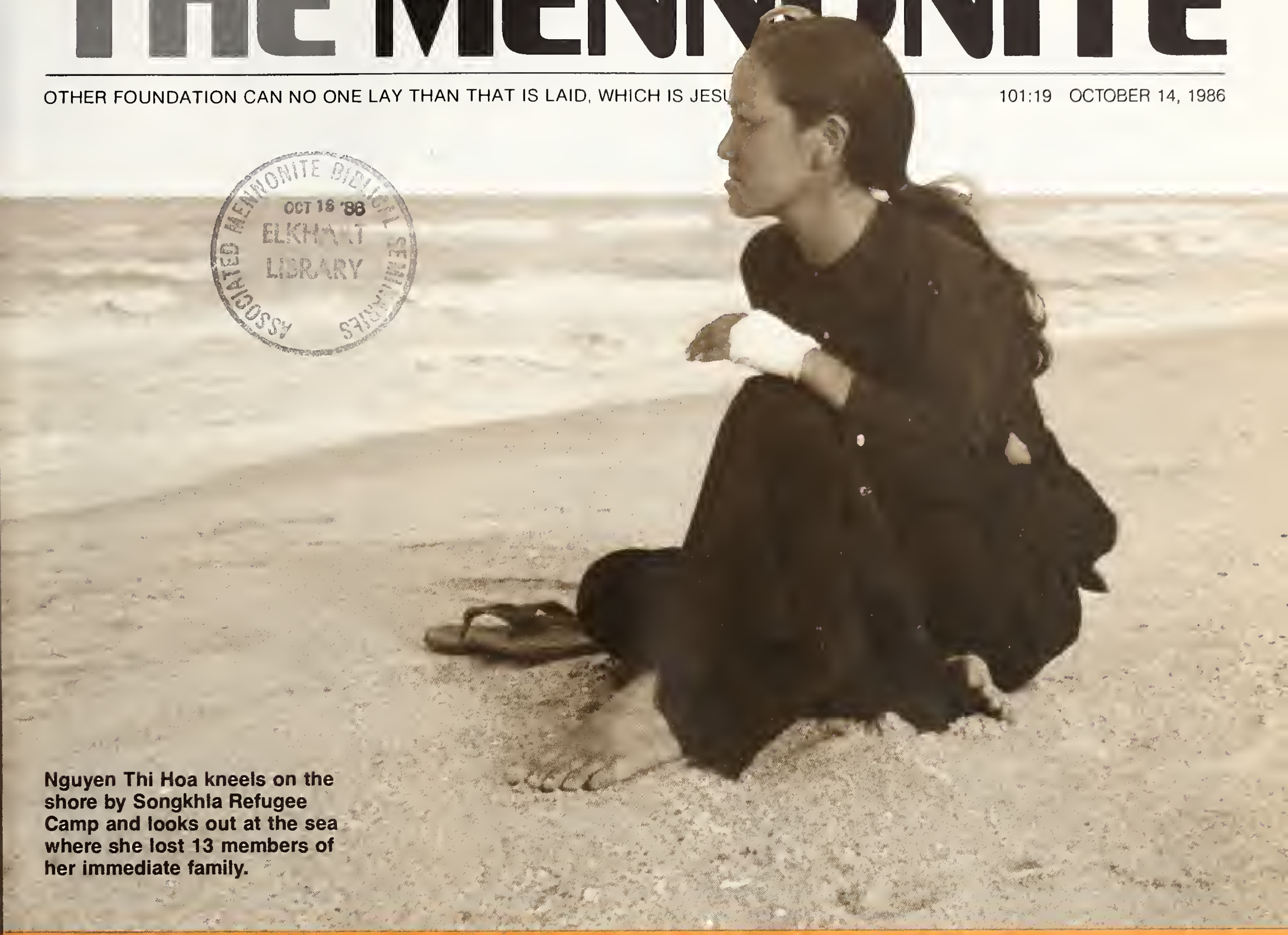


Nguyen Thi Hoa kneels on the shore by Songkhla Refugee Camp and looks out at the sea where she lost 13 members of her immediate family.

Refugee struggles go on

Sandra Liechty

In the fall of 1978 I read in *The Japan Times* about a group of Vietnamese "boat people" who had just been rescued along the coast of Japan. A Tenrikyo (Buddhist) priest offered to provide temporary shelter for them on the temple grounds. Several refugees had died of exposure on the way and the others were critically ill. The article mentioned that several more boatloads of refugees had already been brought to Japan and that the government was trying to find adequate facilities for them.

Before coming to Tokyo, my family participated in the sponsorship of several Indochinese refugees to our community in Archbold, Ohio, along with other local church people. For several months we helped teach English, find jobs, housing and provided supportive friendship to these newcomers. It had

Refugees prepare food on grounded boat at Songkhla Camp, Thailand.

Children piled into the Liechty mission van every Saturday for Japanese study at the Urawa YMCA. YWCA college girls served as volunteer teachers.

Kazuhiro Akitomo, former exchange student at Goshen (Ind.) College, is one of the volunteers teaching Japanese under the SIVA program.

been a meaningful involvement. Two years later, while attending seminary in preparation for mission work in Tokyo, I met more Vietnamese who were living in the Elkhart, Ind., area. At one point I elected to do a study of Vietnam's history, culture and church development for a missions course. One of our seminary classmates was married to a Vietnamese woman who had come into the church through the efforts of a missionary in Vietnam. She helped me with my study and was also preparing to go back to Asia with her husband as a missionary.

With this background of experience with Vietnamese refugees, I felt God was opening doors to again become involved in Japan. The newspaper office gave me the number of the Tenrikyo priest. He was kind and informative and said that since there were no relief facilities in Japan the government had instructed the Japan Red Cross to subcontract housing from voluntary religious groups or from private institutions. He gave me the numbers and addresses of government and Red Cross officials.

Together with pastor Michio Ohno, then chairman of the Tokyo Area Fellowship of Mennonite Churches, we visited one government office after another. The situation each time was the same. Other than statistics, they offered no information about the refugees or of how volunteers might get involved. Each office sent us to a different official. We spent one whole day going from one government department to another.

Finally we were directed to inquire at the Catholic center for joint voluntary agencies called "Caritas Japan." Here we met a Catholic priest from New York who was surrounded by cardboard boxes overflowing with the official paperwork on every refugee in Japan. His phone was constantly ringing, and he appeared exhausted yet determined to help as many of the refugees as possible to find their way to third countries. In the following months we were to discover the reason for his fatigue. He provided us with invaluable background information about the refugees' plight and the Japanese government's way of dealing with the problem.

Since May 1977, Indochinese refugees began entering Japanese ports aboard trading vessels whose captains had rescued them at sea. They had not intentionally set out for Japan; rather they were seeking to find their way to temporary places of refuge such as Hong Kong or the Philippines. From there they hoped to be resettled in friendly nations where they would have the opportunity to begin new lives.

Japanese authorities and citizens kept asking the boat people, "Why did you leave your country?" and reminded them that upon losing World War II the Japanese had not fled but had knuckled under and worked their way out of the ashes of war. In some ways it was a valid question, but equally worth remembering was that many thousands of entire Vietnamese families had risked capture by their own police and grave danger on the high seas in order to escape what they felt was an intolerably oppressive new political rule. Only a small percentage of those who tried to escape were known to succeed. Most were captured, pirated, died of exposure or drowned. The largest number of refugees were young boys between the ages of 13 and 19 who chose to strike out on their own rather than burden their already underfed families, or be conscripted into the communist army.

As a result of wars and oppressive governmental systems, Japan along with the rest of the world was witnessing a phenomenon of people displacement unprecedented in modern Asian history. Father Clarke believed that as a relatively new yet full member of the world's affluent societies, Japan could no longer turn its back on the plight of these struggling Asian neighbors.

Caritas headquarters provided us with data on all 1,500 refugees then living in crowded camps scattered throughout Japan. Most camps were purposely selected for their location far from the public eye. This "invasion" of the stable, homogeneous nation of Japan could be seen as a great threat, or as an opportunity for this highly advanced society to take constructive action. Due largely to growing world criticism of Japan's lack of involvement in the refugee crisis, in 1981 the prime minister made the goodwill gesture of accepting 1,000 Indochinese refugees into Japanese society. A small resettlement center was built in Osaka where "selected" refugees could receive three months of language training and orientation to Japanese culture, after which they would be "graduated." In reality the actual process of helping the refugees leave the scattered camps, go through the center program and then find jobs and enter society proved to be slow and cumbersome. In time the center became backed up with families with nowhere to go while the waiting list to be admitted to the center kept growing longer.

Father Clarke encouraged Pastor Ohno and me to visit a small camp north of Tokyo, where about 30 refugees were being temporarily sheltered in the empty rooms of a ward for retarded adults. Over the next four years we visited this camp many times. New families kept arriving until eventually more than 100 people packed the rooms. While living conditions in Japan seem luxurious compared to refugee camps in places like Hong Kong and the Philippines, they were appallingly crowded and inadequate by Japanese living standards. Three toilets served 40 people in one building. The "kitchen" consisted of two gas burners on a table in the hallway where all the families in one building took turns cooking. Large extended families shared one straw-mat room. Although the resourceful refugees were able to salvage old color TV sets and other discarded appliances from the dump adjacent to the camp, the day-after-day routine of waiting for something to happen created an air of despair.

Most people hoped to be resettled in the United States, where many already had friends and relatives. Together with other missionaries and English-speaking friends, my husband and I began teaching English conversation regularly. It was good to see Japanese friends and church groups provide bedding, dishes and clothing for the people. Most of all they appreciated having friends come and sit with them, eat their food and listen to their stories. During this time, not a single government or Red Cross official visited the camp to offer any kind of counsel or concrete help. But when UN staff or volunteers visited the camp to offer humanistic concern, they were treated coldly by both the camp director and the Red Cross people. It became clear that their official role was simply to deposit the United Nations High Commission for Refugees allocated welfare payments with the camp office and handle paperwork for the government. In reality, the major burden of administrating the daily camp activities was left totally up to the mental institution's director, who had simply offered to rent his empty rooms to the Red Cross as temporary housing. Later we learned that both he and two other office workers were receiving substantial salaries from the Red Cross for their services.

With the help of the MCC office in Akron, Pa., we were quickly able to find church sponsors for several families in the United States in 1979. But the rate of refugees being admitted by Western nations slackened, whereas the numbers arriving in Japan was increasing. Waiting became the name of the game. The refugees were waiting to realize their dream of going to a Western nation to resettle. The Red Cross said they were waiting for the UNHCR to finish processing refugee cases to know which ones were eligible for resettlement. The UN office claimed they were waiting for the Japanese government to do something to resolve the red tape involved. By fall of 1981 it was announced to the refugees that they would not qualify for third countries. This was a great shock for many who already had close relatives living abroad. A definite change in atmosphere was felt in all the camps. More South Vietnamese flags appeared on the walls of the refugees' rooms; the men held late-night meetings to exchange political information; underground literature appeared, criticizing the communist regime in Vietnam and encouraging support of a guerrilla liberation movement.

For the sake of the 15 children in the Tokyo camp, volunteers began a special program of language study, for each time we had tried to get the children into local schools we were told it was impossible so long as they could not speak Japanese. For six months local housewives, YWCA junior college students and others came to teach Japanese to the Vietnamese children. Some days we transported the children to the local YMCA building. Other days we had to use the camp facilities, which were poorly lighted, cold and lacking in materials. Finally, in the spring of 1982, we piled all the children and teachers into five cars and drove our caravan to the local elementary school. Dressed in their best clothes, the Vietnamese children and their parents bowed low to the astonished principal and exhibited their papers and read out loud from their storybooks. It still required several more visits to the city authorities, local PTA, and government and tax offices, but the children were eventually admitted.

This accomplishment inspired our loosely organized volunteer group to form SIVA (Saitama International Volunteers Association). We now had nearly 30 people cooperating with us from all walks of life. Housewives, businessmen, students, Christians and non-Christians. Pastor Yoshihira Inamine, currently chairman of TAFMC (Tokyo Area Fellowship of Mennonite Churches), was elected coordinator of SIVA. Church groups and individuals throughout Japan heard of our efforts and contributed to our fund. We were able to raise over $6,000 to begin a refugee sponsorship program.

Our most immediate goal was to begin operating a night school for teaching Japanese to non-Japanese residents, using local citizens as teachers.

In order to break up the logjam of more than 2,500 refugees now waiting in Japan's scattered camps, a new government-sponsored transit camp is being built near Tokyo's Haneda Airport to house over 700 people. After several months of language training and orientation, these refugees will be permitted to reside in Japan.

Helping refugees find employment and housing involves processes much more complex and expensive in Japan than we in the West are accustomed to. The United Nations has offered to give legal and procedural assistance to volunteer organizations such as SIVA. Being the only organized sponsorship group in the Tokyo area, we anticipate the need for more financial and personnel assistance in the future. Since all our volunteers are busy with families and jobs of their own, SIVA is seeking a worker who can give full time in this service. It is our hope that the Japan Mennonite Fellowship will take up this matter with MCC and consider the possibility of again establishing an MCC unit in Japan to help in such peace-related efforts as the refugee work.

> *"Helping refugees find employment and housing involves processes much more complex and expensive in Japan than we in the West are accustomed to."*

It was a great joy to discover that the new official Vietnamese interpreter for the UN is a Christian who received his English training from MCC worker Max Ediger in Saigon years ago. He himself came to Japan as a refugee.

Working alongside SIVA volunteers to overcome the many hurdles that still hamper resettlement efforts, I often think back to that day over four years ago when we first met the Catholic priest working so frantically in his cluttered office. He has long since returned to New York to recuperate from an exhausting term of service, but his courage and undaunted Christian concern for Vietnamese refugees stranded in Japan inspired the rest of us to keep on doing justice in the name of our Lord Jesus.

Sandra Liechty, 2122 Mimuro, Urawa shi, Saitama ken, 336 Japan, is a GC missionary in Japan.

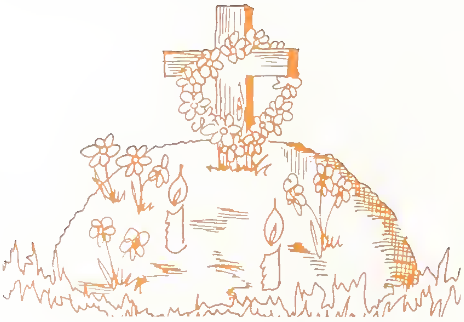
Grandma is free at last

Mary Kay Meyer

We did everything we knew to do for Grandma, but she died. She died in the intensive care unit at the hospital where she had been for five days. She died attended by caring and competent medical people with all the modern life-sustaining systems. She died surrounded by the family she loved—weeping daughters, son-in-law, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and her aging husband, Pascual. Later we were told that Grandma was the first refugee to die in sanctuary, and we were sorry for Concordia, Kan., to have this distinction.

She came in January 1985, and the reunion was wonderful. Her daughter, Rosario, who had been with us almost two years, had maintained with great sadness that she would never see her parents again. "They are too old and too weak to make the trip," Rosario said. But on a cold, snowy January day the Guatemalan families were reunited in the middle of Kansas. Juana embraced grandchildren who had become young adults since she last saw them. She wept with joy to meet for the first time beautiful, little Irma, born to Rosario the May before. She held great-grandchildren whom she had never seen and beamed with happiness. We needed no language that day to know something of what she was experiencing.

I remember that time in January. Grandma did not seem old. And she wasn't, at least not by our standards. She was only 60, but for a Guatemalan Indian, life is hard and expectancy only around 45 years. Under normal conditions life is hard, but when one adds the fear and turmoil of war, forced flight from one's country, the rigors of survival in the refugee camps, and then another long, hard flight on foot to a new land, it is no wonder she began to fail shortly after her arrival. None of us imagined, however, that only six months after she reached Kansas we would be burying her body.



Grandma was in her final resting place.

Juana was beautiful and strong, with that quiet dignity that seems to be so inherent in the indigenous Mayan people. We have come to love them much during our 2½ years as a sanctuary for Central American refugees. The devotion of Pascual to Juana brought us to tears many times in the hospital. We watched him standing beside her bed, holding her hand and talking non-stop to the unconscious woman who had been his partner in life. What was he saying to her as he kept this constant vigil beside her? And did she hear him speaking their K'anjobal dialect? Did she hear him telling her of the old days in the village when the children were small and the work and the play were rich with memories? We cried with Pascual, and we still cry when we think of Juana slipping away into eternity. He waits now to join her, and surely there will be a beautiful Guatemalan corner in heaven for them, complete with corn fields, bright cortes, a marimba playing the "Son" and the quetzal bird flying free.

Free at last. We buried Grandma with a simple funeral and in a packing case box. It was the pressed wood case that a "real" coffin had been shipped in. Her family thought it quite grand and said there was nothing that wonderful in all Guatemala. We cringed inside and hoped they would never see a typical American burial. Juana was buried as much as possible in the customs of her native land. Local law does not require embalming when buried within 24 hours and when the body is not taken across state lines. We were grateful not to have to subject the family to this "civilized" ritual.

The wake was like one in the old days in America. Our '72 Ford pickup became the hearse. We transported Grandma from the hospital to the little home where she had lived. Her body was dressed in her work clothes, complete with apron and the sweater she always wore to try to ward off the chills that so often swept over her. The whole family spent that last night with their matriarch—spent it as they had lived—babies nursing, children playing, women and men weeping softly, and sometimes laughing and talking too, with sleep finally overtaking them all. Grandma, lying on her funeral cot, had a gentle smile on her face. I knew that if she opened her eyes they would be twinkling. I couldn't believe she had been so sick. I couldn't believe she was dead. She looked just like she had when I had met her many times on the road in back of Manna House as she walked between daughters' houses. Once more I was reminded of the mystery: "a time to be born and a time to die."

It was the Fourth of July (1985) when we celebrated the burial Mass in Spanish and in K'anjobal. *Independence Day. Grandma was free.* She was free at last from pain, from fright and terror. She was free from the great loneliness known only by people without a country—people who, in some folks' eyes, don't belong anywhere. Grandma had truly gone home. No more long treks through the desert, no more hiding from the spotters' airplanes, no more wondering and anguishing over loved ones left behind, no more worry about the future.

A borrowed grave. I wept . . . I still weep every time I remember that graveside scene. Before her body was lowered into the ground, her grandson opened the box and lovingly placed a rose into Grandma's hands. Then he gently covered her face and closed the box. Another grandson solemnly lowered the box. Grandma was in her final resting place, in a land not her own.

Another mother, an Iranian woman, comforts her child near the grave of her husband. He was killed in the 1984 war between Iran and Iraq.

The young fellows skillfully handled those shovels. The motion was so smooth it was as if the tools were an extension of their arms. I wondered as I heard the dirt going into the hole, What's ahead for the children? What's ahead for Angel, with his T-shirt reading *Native Kansan*? What's ahead for little 5-year-old José Luis, with his *Superman* shirt and his too-big *Pepsi-Cola* cap? Will they ever know the Guatemala their Grandma knew? How many more will die before the war is over and they can go home? Will the Mayan people and their culture be another "expendable" this century?

The family still brings flowers to Grandma's grave. For nine days following the burial they had special prayers and times of pilgrimage to the fresh little mound in the cemetery. Their great sadness yet is, "We will have to leave Grandma behind when we go home." To have to be in exile in a strange land is difficult. To have to leave one's wife, mother, grandmother in a borrowed grave in a strange land is hard for the heart.

Mary Kay Meyer works with Manna House of Prayer, 323 E. Fifth, Box 675, Concordia, KS 66901. Manna House has been a sanctuary for Central American refugees now for several years.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

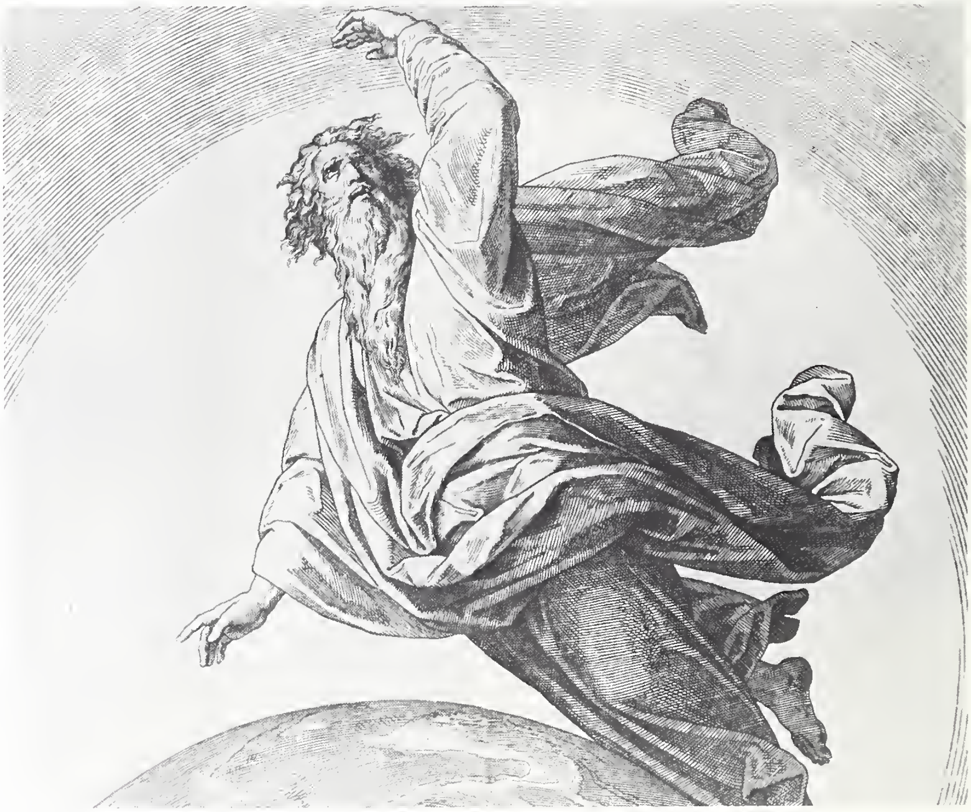
A response to inclusive language

Janet L. Janzen

I am a supporter of women's rights in many areas, but the first time I heard the word "chairperson" I was amused. Then the Lutheran church came out with a new hymnal in which most of the "men" became "all" or "friends." They even took the "fellowship" out of "Blest Be the Tie that Binds." This bothered me, but not too much, since by then I was in the Mennonite church. According to its hymnal, I still knew most of the words by memory. I stumbled over such changes in personal pronouns referring to humanity, but had no great theological problems with them.

But now some feminist theologians have decided that we must also change the pronouns and words we use to refer to God. They would have us do away with "Father," "King," "Lord" and "Son of God" in favor of terms such as "Parent," "Friend," "Womb of Being" and "Child of God." They believe that the biblical use of masculine imagery was merely a product of the patriarchal society in which the writers lived and, as such, must be changed. I have serious problems when it comes to changing our words for God and have been studying the subject of inclusive language.

The National Council of Churches published *An Inclusive Language Lectionary* in 1983. In these selected portions of the Bible, no masculine pronouns are used to refer to God. "Father" is replaced by "Father and Mother." This was my first exposure to such a transformation of the Bible. I do not consider it a translation, because it does not attempt to capture the meaning of the author's original words. Take, for example, the word "father." Jesus used the Greek word "pater" to refer to God—over 200 times, according to my concordance. "Pater" meant "father" or "male ancestor" but never "mother." Feminists argue that Jesus called God "father" because of the patriarchal society of his day. However, if he had wanted to follow the conventions of his day he never would have called God his father. Nobody had done that before, and it was tantamount to blasphemy. Female goddesses abounded at that time, so he could have used "mother" just as easily, if he had wished.



Writer Janet Janzen addresses the age-old question that is also referred to in the illustration: Who is God in terms of today's world and today's thinking?

Some feminists advocate a return to the goddess concept, or the "Mother-God." Such a trend prompted Elizabeth Achtemeier of Union Theological Seminary to state that she believes "much of feminist theology is a return to Baalism" (foreword to *Battle for the Trinity*). According to James R. Edwards, writing in *Christianity Today* (Feb. 21, 1986), "God does not need a female counterpart to complete his identity. When a female counterpart is present, fertility worship, or neo-Baalism, lurks beneath." To those who seek to escape the patriarchalism of biblical religion by making God into a goddess, Donald Bloesch observes that "the goddess religions of the Near East were far more oppressively patriarchal than Hebraic religion" (Bloesch, *Battle for the Trinity*, pp. 39-40).

Some try to do away with personal pronouns altogether, leaving words such as "Timeless One," "Ground of Being" or simply "Mystery." I have a difficult time praying to a mystery. I believe God revealed himself personally, as a father and through Jesus, so that we people could relate to him.

I also believe that the names God has revealed to us for himself are significant. Great importance is attached to the name of the Lord in the Old Testament. Over and over the Psalms admonish us to bless his name, praise his name or call upon his name. The New Testament contains many references to the name of Jesus, even saying that "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). If we change his name, we are worshiping a different god. I agree with Bloesch that "the debate is not primarily over women's rights, but over the doctrine of God" (Ibid, p. 11).

Janet L. Janzen, 1147 Perry, Wichita, KS 67201, wrote the above in response to a sermon on inclusive language.

Faith is sustained by hope
Habakkuk 2:20-3:19

Thomas Finger

When they consider the massive scope of evil and suffering in our world, many modern people feel as did the ancient prophet Habakkuk. When we consider the lives lost through warfare, famine and disease, it may seem as if God has abandoned the world to forces that keep on "mercilessly slaying nations forever" (Habakkuk 1:17). It may seem as if God has made humans "like crawling things that have no ruler" (1:14) and remains "silent when the wicked swallows up the person more righteous than he" (1:13).

When the human heart is deeply touched by evil, it almost instinctively longs to see evil punished and good rewarded. Although this longing can express itself as a crude thirst for vengeance, something more profound is behind it. It arises from the desire to be assured that goodness is ultimately stronger than evil. For if people do not believe this deep down, it is hard, if not impossible, to live with any kind of joy or hope.

The prophet Habakkuk believed so strongly that God was just that he became deeply disturbed when injustice seemed to reign unchecked in Judah (1:1-4). When he learned that God would judge this injustice by bringing the Babylonians against his people (1:5-11), he was even more upset. For the Babylonians would "all come for violence" (1:9); they would "march through the breadth of the earth to seize habitations not their own" (1:6). How could a God whose eyes were too pure to behold evil possibly tolerate such destruction (1:13)?

Our previous studies have shown how the agonizing prophet learned that no matter how great the upheaval or danger he lived through, the humble walk of faithfulness would always remain the key to living fellowship with God (2:4). Then, having calmed Habakkuk's agitation, God granted him some insight into how justice would be worked out. In the course of history, nations who conquer others will eventually be overthrown by those whom they oppress (2:8).

While this answer doubtless gave some satisfaction, God granted the beleaguered prophet a yet deeper assurance of his justice. Habakkuk ends his prophecies against oppressing nations (2:5-19) by ridiculing their "dumb idols," their breathless gods (2:18-19). Then, in sharp contrast, he sounds forth the magnificent proclamation: "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him" (2:20). What follows is an overwhelming vision (3:3-15). Its psalm-like form shows it was probably recited in worship for generations to come.

Habakkuk envisions God coming northward from the region of Mount Sinai (of "Teman" and "Paran"—3:3), from whence he led forth Israel centuries ago. Yahweh's coming, whose glory covers the heavens (3:3) and shakes the earth (3:6), is also like the dry winds blowing up from the desert in late autumn, which assault the tents of the desert tribes (3:7). Then he recalls the winter storms which blow in from the Mediterranean, and the imagery shifts as Yahweh's chariots subdue the turbulent sea (3:8, 10, 15). Its surging waters represent the nations that assail Israel (see Psalm 65:7).

God is at work in all situations and places. Part of that truth is symbolized in this nine-foot-high statue of Jesus under water in the Pennkamp Park at the Florida Keys. The upraised hands are only a few feet from the water's surface.

On one level Habakkuk's vision assures him of Babylon's eventual defeat (3:16). Yet like many biblical prophecies it stretches far beyond this to the day when God will reckon with all nations (3:6, 12). It conveys a deep assurance that however long evil and suffering may rage God is sovereign and will finally bring them to an end. Habakkuk's imagery, of course, mostly depicts the conquest of evil (3:7, 12-15). Yet this is but a prelude to the time when "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (2:14).

Deeply assured by this vision, the prophet's anxiety can finally subside. Confident that God's holiness and justice will ultimately prevail, he can keep on walking in faithfulness, whatever may happen: "Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (3:17-18).

At the end, Habakkuk's small book testifies that while there are no easy solutions to evil and suffering, God is with those who, out of faithfulness to him, refuse to be overwhelmed by them. To those who struggle in this way, God will instill the hope of his final victory, which will enable them to persist, whatever may come. *Fifth and final study in the series on Habakkuk*

Thomas Finger, 5748 W. Race, Chicago, IL 60644, is professor of systematic theology at Northern Baptist Seminary and is a member of First Mennonite Church at Oak Park.

Off with labels

David Johnson Rowe

Conservative. Liberal. Evangelical. Fundamentalist. Biblical inerrancy or inspiration. Social action or evangelism. Ah, there's the rub. The question of social action *or* evangelism has divided Christians for a long time. After all, that's what labels are for, to put things in their proper place. We don't want to find a can of string beans mixed up on the shelf with the mustard. So we label the jars, we label the shelves, we even label the shopping aisle. That way no one gets confused.

I remember the man who shook his head sadly and said to me, "Reverend, I'm disappointed. I had heard you were a gospel-believing church, but it can't be so. You don't have a midweek prayer meeting." That man knew his labels. He knew what ingredients must go into each product so as to be properly labeled.

Then along comes Habitat for Humanity.

On what shelf do you put Habitat?

Enriched by the "soilful" experiences of Koinonia, inspired by the down-to-earth gospel as read by Clarence Jordan, given flesh by Millard Fuller and a few visionaries who dared to imagine all of God's people living in a decent house—those are our roots. Today Habitat is served by so many different kinds of people that it stretches the limits of any label. Thank God.

So what is Habitat?

Conservative—if that means taking the Bible seriously.

Labels too easily keep us from dealing with real people in real situations. When we look upon the needy in this world, the compassion of Christ will move us beyond labels.

Liberal—if that means taking the needs of others seriously.

Evangelical—if that means having a story to tell and wanting to tell it.

Fundamentalist—if that means getting down to the basics.

And the Bible? Well, look at what the Bible says about itself, ". . . all scripture is profitable." We haven't found a verse that stands in our way and we have thousands of verses which urge us onward.

And the ultimate label of all—do you believe in social action or evangelism?

Habitat refuses to choose. Indeed, Habitat rejects such a choice. Habitat is evangelism *with* social action. As I speak across the country I find Christians overjoyed to be a part of our faith in action. I often say that "evangelism is telling people about Jesus, and social action is doing what Jesus said to do. I don't want to stand before God on Judgment Day and try to explain why I chose one over the other."

Habitat does not choose faith or good works. James wrote that "faith without works is dead."

As you discover the ventures of Habitat, you will know that at Habitat faith is alive. At Habitat faith *and* good works are the best partners, working side by side, hand in hand.

With the Bible as our blueprint, with churches as our home base, with volunteers from every denomination as our hands and feet, with Christ as our Lord and friend—we can't go wrong.

Hundreds of houses have been built overseas and across the United States. Thousands of people, from old folks to little children, are living in a bright new world. Houses are going up, families are digging in—and moving in.

It all happens because of you. You are an integral part of the great big circle of God's love.

So let's tear off the labels. Let's be all things to all people—so that some might be saved.

David Johnson Rowe was the president of the board of directors of Habitat for Humanity Inc., 419 W. Church St., Americus, GA 31709, when he wrote this article in Habitat World, *March 1984. He was also pastor at the First Baptist Church, Melrose, Mass. The article is reprinted by permission.*

A kingdom trembling in the air

Michael A. King

"Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come," says Jesus in Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer (11:2). These majestic words were followed by plain and simple ones: "Give us this day our daily bread. . ." (11:3). After the prayer (in 11:5-13) Jesus tells two parables to illustrate how his followers should pray. In one parable the point is made that we should pray persistently, like a friend determined to get food out of a friend at midnight no matter what, because his pantry is bare and yet a third friend has come to spend the night. In the second parable Jesus says that God is like a human parent who would never give a snake or scorpion to a child asking for a fish or an egg. God is like that, only more so, because human parents are flawed and God is not.

I have often wondered how to apply such words from a world which after 2,000 years seems remote and insubstantial to my real life in this real world. One aspect of this, particularly, I have pondered. If the points of Jesus' parables are applied to such a concrete petition as the one for bread, and if that stands for all the material, tangible things we need to stay alive, how is such prayer answered? Does bread, heating fuel and clothing just drop down from heaven into mouths, into fuel tanks and onto naked backs? I'm not inclined to say our needs are never met in mysterious ways, but most of the time, it seems, things don't work that way.

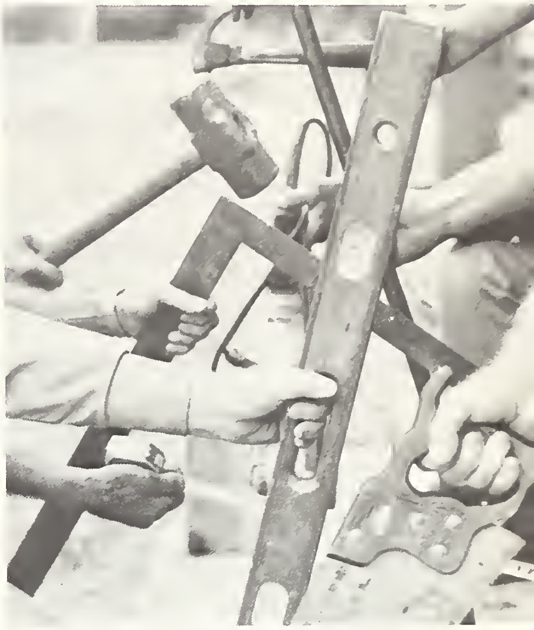
So how do they work? I wonder if the clue is buried in the phrase, "Thy kingdom come." The Bible bristles with suggestions of what it means for the kingdom to come. It means for a community to arise of people who abide in Jesus and he in them and all in each other as they love one another as Jesus has loved them (John 15:5, 12). The kingdom bubbles into being like a cool stream when a thirsty, hungry or naked man or woman is given drink and food and clothing (Matthew 25:35-36). The kingdom is that better country, that heavenly city for which Abel and Enoch and Abraham yearned (Hebrews 11). And it was that country whose outlines could for a time be seen when in the early church "there was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them and brought the proceeds . . . and distribution was made to each as any had need" (Acts 4:34-35).

So could it be that one important way God gives us our daily bread is to call forth from among us a community of people committed to sharing bread with each other? Could it be that as the bankers like grim reapers come to take away the cars, the houses or the farms of some among us; as for others utility or medical bills mount up and food comes hard, God has every intention of answering prayer by softening the hearts of those of us who have means to help them?

I think it was some such faith that God would keep providing daily bread through a loving community scattered around the world that kept my parents going through the hard years as missionaries with nine kids to keep alive. When the bills rolled in and the money dwindled down, my parents would take seriously Jesus' injunction to "ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you" (11:9). Particularly did they need to do so when they retired from mission work, with nine large children (and growing larger) still at home and with few jobs to be found by former missionaries pushing 50. Finally my dad found a job putting together wood stoves and agricultural equipment in a factory at minimum wage.

For a year he did that, and with no real estate and precious few savings he tried to keep all 11 of us alive. It wasn't enough. I didn't have too much faith in any oddity as God at the time, so I didn't join in, but I know my parents prayed mightily during that time. I also know they didn't say much to others about the straits they were in. They just prayed and clung to their faith that God would somehow provide daily bread.

The heavens didn't open. No bread dropped down. The soil didn't sprout greenbacks, only grass. But from here and there, through an anonymous check in the mail, a bag of clothes, an invitation to a meal, a special offering taken, the kingdom of God, though I didn't recognize it at the time, came and took us in. We survived until the day my dad rose in the factory and his wages with him.



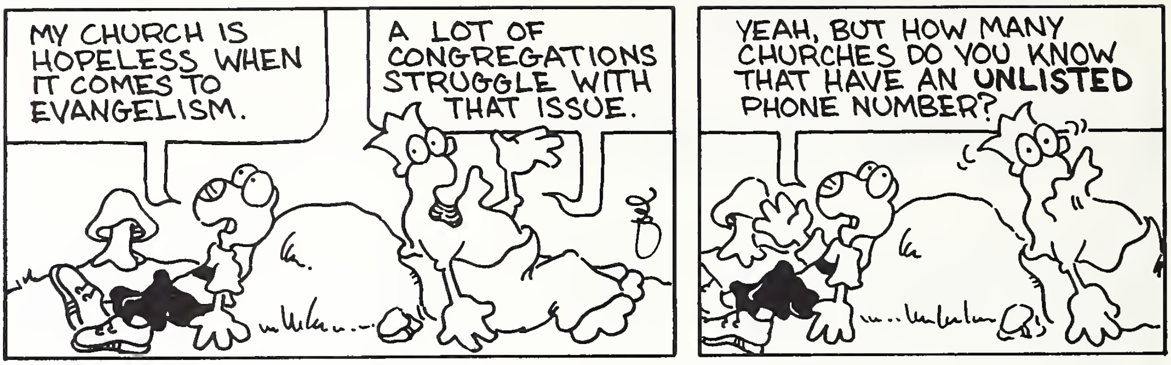
Could God be asking those of us with means to assist those without means? Is that how the kingdom comes?

Now I look around the world and see the lack of bread that must send many to their graves convinced God's promises are empty. And I don't understand entirely how any God can stand by and watch people die. With Job, I have some protests.

But I also wonder if God is right now at work, trying to unclench the fists that build the missiles into hands outstretched, whispering in our hearts, pleading with us to beat the weapons into plowshares that will plow the earth so all can have their bread. I wonder if God's kingdom trembles in the air, ready to wrap earth's starving people in the community of love which could take shape even today if we loved the world as my family was once loved.

Michael A. King, 47 W. Johnson St., Philadelphia, PA 19144, is pastor at the Germantown Mennonite Church. This article first appeared in the July 1986 issue of The Clergy Journal, *Box 1625, Austin, TX 78767, and is reprinted by permission.*

Pontius' Puddle


MY CHURCH IS HOPELESS WHEN IT COMES TO EVANGELISM.
A LOT OF CONGREGATIONS STRUGGLE WITH THAT ISSUE.
YEAH, BUT HOW MANY CHURCHES DO YOU KNOW THAT HAVE AN **UNLISTED** PHONE NUMBER?

NEWS

91 seminars in the last four years

Tooling up for evangelism

Newton, Kan.—Sixty-three people were added, Sept. 19-20, to the over 6,000 who have now attended Friendship Evangelism Seminars, a combined effort of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. Don Yoder, Tempe, Ariz., secretary for church planting and evangelism for the General Conference, conducted this most recent one at First Mennonite Church here. (Yoder's colleagues in FES are Art McPhee and Ed Taylor.)

Yoder, who is also employed half time by the Pacific District Conference as conference minister and church planter, affirms the various methods of evangelism. "God uses many ways to draw people," he affirmed, and proceeded to list the large campaigns with simultaneous translations, special events like Easter and harvest festivals, camps and coffeehouses, service strategies like Mennonite Disaster Service and Mennonite Voluntary Service, home Bible studies and person-to-person evangelism.

Yoder went on to describe three approaches to personal evangelism: the direct and confrontational approach ("Are you saved?"), the dialogue approach ("We can talk if you like.") and the relational approach ("Let's get to know each other.")

Evangelism, says Yoder, is "a call to say yes to God and also a call to service. And numbers do matter. Numbers represent people. The Gospels are clear in their mention of 12 and 120 and then 3,000, and finally 'multiplied day by day.' "

"Some of us," Yoder continued, "are afraid of not knowing all the answers and are therefore hesitant to share our faith. You can always say, 'I'll try to find out. Why don't you join me?' "

Yoder quoted studies saying that in congregations that are trained in friendship evangelism often about a third of the members are active in talking about their faith. "And," Yoder is quick to add, "you need the other two-thirds of the congregation for support ministries."

"Jesus let people into his life," he said, describing model evangelism. "Jesus was *with* people, listening, giving assignments, supervising, praying. Jesus took risks, like speaking alone with the Samaritan woman. And, finally, if Jesus needed the descending of the Holy Spirit, how much more do we."

"The Music Box," a film, was used in the seminar as a parable for the joy of salvation. In the film a factory worker finally "can't keep the secret any longer"; he shares the gospel and lives are changed.

Yoder gave useful hints about establishing contact (using neighborhood

Don Yoder (left) and Fremont Regier (North Newton, Kan.) converse during a break.

Involvement of members of Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., in the Overground Railroad for Central American refugees was featured in a recent article in the *Wichita Eagle-Beacon.* Through the Overground Railroad a sponsoring church arranges for housing, English classes and employment for refugees who are awaiting permission from Canadian officials to settle there. Usually a bond is paid to release the refugees from U.S. detention centers until they are able to move north. The sponsors at Faith Church have supported three refugees so far, two from Guatemala and one from Honduras.

A congressional witness on Sept. 11 called for a law to protect Chicanos and Mexicans all along the Mexico-U.S. border because of escalating abuses by U.S. officials. Roberto Martinez of the American Friends Service Committee testified before the House Criminal Justice Subcommittee. Martinez presented several documented cases of physical and verbal abuse and charged that three people have been killed since 1983 by Border Patrol vehicles in the San Diego/Imperial Valley area.

More than 100 religious and civic leaders kicked off a worldwide petition campaign last week in Washington aimed at persuading the five nuclear nations to reduce drastically their arsenals by the end of the century. The document is titled a "Citizens' Declaration on Worldwide Nuclear Disarmament: Start Now, Finishing Before the Year 2000."

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events like open houses and garage sales as well as taking walks), about meeting people (the importance of the warm smile and friendly handshake) and about the receptive times in people's lives.

This seminar was strong on lecture. "I had expected and kept waiting for more interaction with and between participants," said one.

After serving his (Indiana) home church—which chose him by lot—for 12 years, Yoder accepted a church planting assignment in Phoenix, Ariz. "Evangelism took on new meaning," he says. In 1976 Koinonia Fellowship was begun in nearby Tempe/Chandler, with Yoder as founding pastor. This past June, 22 years later, Yoder participated in the first worship service of Good Shepherd Mennonite Church in northwest Phoenix; 20 families had been commissioned by the Phoenix church to start a "daughter" congregation. "I felt like a grandfather!" Yoder said. He and his wife, Bonnie, attend this new church.

Two levels of Friendship Evangelism Seminars are available. An FES II (for which the first seminar is a prerequisite) concentrates on "how to" for the whole congregation, mobilizing its skills. People who have paid and attended a seminar can come to another one repeatedly at no additional cost.

Both seminars are available upon request. Contact Melba Martin, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515, (219) 294-7523. *Muriel T. Stackley*

Our apologies to those of our readers who were inconvenienced by the late arrival of the Sept. 23 issue of *The Mennonite*. Because of a broken part in the Newton press, the job of printing had to be taken to Wichita. *Editor*

Sun dries spices in Bangladesh

Dhaka, Bangladesh (MCC)—Nine women in northern Bangladesh are drying ginger, tumeric, coriander and red chili peppers in cabinet-type solar dryers. These spices, an essential part of Bengali cooking, are sold in Bangladesh and to alternative trading organizations in Europe. In another Mennonite Central Committee job creation project in southern Banladesh, about 60 women solar-dry grated coconut. This coconut, called "Surjosnato," which means "bathed in sunshine," is sold to candy and cookie factories here in the capital of Bangladesh. During peak season—the dry, sunny winter months—the women produce three metric tons of solar-dried coconut a month.

Farmers will gather to look at the future

Farmer's eyes will be turned to the future at the third Faith and Farming Conference at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa., Dec. 3-5. "During one of the darkest periods of North American agriculture—like the Hebrew exile in Babylon—we again look to God and to the future," says Levi Miller of the Laurelville Center.

The first two Faith and Farming conferences at Laurelville in 1984 and 1985 helped to plant the seeds for a book about rural people and their relationships to the land, to God and to other people. Two-thirds of the writers in *Family Farmers: Stewards of the Lord's Land*, the working title for the book of essays that Faith and Life Press is publishing in March 1987, participated in one of the previous Faith and Farming conferences.

LaVonne G. Platt, Newton, Kan., editor of *Family Farmers*, says, "The seminars for this conference on alternative agriculture, land trusts and generational transfer of farmland suggest possibilities of a link between the values of the past and a sustainable future for both family farms and rural communities. I hope this will be their focus."

Major addresses on the future of North American and Mennonite farming will be given by Howard Brenneman of Hesston, Kan. Brenneman has wide farm and business experience, having been associated with Hesston Corporation for 28 years, nine as president.

In a change from the usual program, seminars will be offered on a variety of subjects. These will include "Alternate Agriculture," led by Keith Helmuth, a farmer and lay philosopher from Debeck, N.B.; "Dealing with Family Stress," led by John Hershberger of Oaklawn Psychiatric Center in Elkhart, Ind.; "Ownership for the Future: Land Trusts," led by James Stew-

continued on next page

Twelve hydraulic ram pumps will be produced and installed in the next five months in Nepal. The ram pump, adapted and designed by Mennonite Central Committee worker Randy Friesen of Garden City, Kan., is a pump in which the momentum of a falling column of water is used to raise a portion of that water to an even greater height. The ram pumps are used to raise spring water several hundred feet to Nepal's hilltop villages.

Summer brings out the worst health problems in Egypt's rural areas, as heat, flies, crowded conditions and problematic water supplies combine to exacerbate already marginal hygienic conditions. At the Harpur Memorial Hospital in Menouf, an Anglican-supported hospital 80 kilometers northwest of Cairo, wards are crowded. Mennonite Central Committee workers Marlene Ewert of Balko, Okla., and Lorene Lehman of Fort Wayne, Ind., are training nursing staff at Harpur and helping with occasional village clinics. Their MCC terms expire at the end of this year.

"Music," says Ken Hawkley, "seems to be the only art form that people use in church services with any regularity. While I am not questioning the place of music in worship, I often wonder why other forms of art are confined to the Sunday school class or considered inappropriate." Hawkley was joined by Gerda Krause and Ruth Sawatzky in planning a summer Arts and Drama Festival, held at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C. "Let Us Create for Our Creator" became the theme around which participants discovered how art can be used to enhance worship. Performances and art displays were added to workshops.

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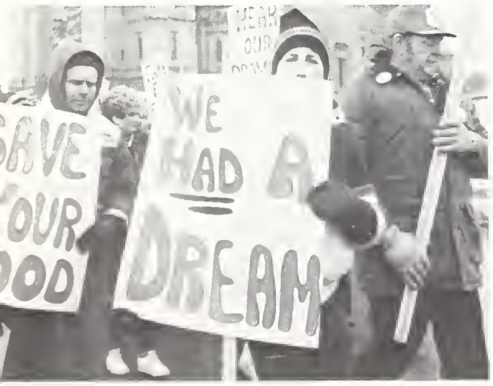
art, who chairs the board of the First National Bank of Lincoln, Ill.; "Generational Transfer of Farming," led by Dwight Stoltzfus of Goshen, Ind. Stoltzfus farms and has been associated with Mennonite Mutual Aid for many years.

Platt concludes, "Faith and Farming III, looking toward the future of agriculture in North America, promises to be an exciting and productive venture for people concerned about applying their faith to rural life. Envisioning the future can be an empowering experience for a people in covenant with God who see their role as stewards of God's creation."

Various intergenerational farm families will lead in worship, and Elaine Good of Lancaster, Pa., will lead music. The planners noted that a special transition seminar is planned for families who have already left farming or are on their way out, Nov. 30-Dec. 3.

The planning group for the conference included Aden and Helen Yoder, Shipshewana, Ind.; Don and Karen Gingerich, Parnell, Iowa; Dwight Stoltzfus, Goshen, Ind.; and Arnold Cressman and Levi Miller of the Laurelville Center.

For more information contact Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Route 5, Box 145, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666, (412) 423-2056.



Refugees celebrate completion of housing repairs

San Marcos Ocotepeque, Honduras (MCC)—Refugee construction crews in the Mesa Grande camp here take time for a group picture in the midst of celebrating the completion of a housing repair project. Crews replaced the plastic and cloth siding on 1,240 houses with wood between February 1985 and June 1986.

Linda Shelly, Newton, Kan., Mennonite Central Committee country representative in Honduras, reports that overcrowding remains a serious problem in the nearby Colomoncagua refugee camp, where Honduran Mennonites and MCC workers are also involved. Many of the 15-by-36-foot (4.5-by-10.8-meter) houses in that camp are occupied by more than 20 people. Plans in Colomoncagua are to build 100 houses before next June and construction is already under way. These two camps are home to over 21,000 Salvadoran refugees who have fled the civil war in their country.

Youth leader (part-time) required for the North Leamington United Mennonite Church. Responsibilities include coordinating the educational, recreational and spiritual activities of the youth as well as some congregational involvement. Work commences **Jan. 1, 1987**. Application forms available until Oct. 15.

Contact:
North Leamington United Mennonite Church
Attn: Shirley Driedger
Route 5
Leamington, ON N8H 3V8.

Year-round resident-director team required for spring '87 at Camp Koinonia near Boissevain, Man. Couple preferred. Job includes maintenance, food service, hosting of rental groups, camp promotion, outdoor education, involvement in summer camp program, etc. Application deadline is **Dec. 31**.

For more information, write or call:
Monica Wiebe
Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba
202-1483 Pembina Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C9
(204) 477-0873.

Coming next issue: *The Mennonite* on cassette tape

It is something new under the sun! Our church paper will be available on cassette tape beginning with the Oct. 28 issue.

Volunteer readers in the Newton, Kan., area are being coordinated by Martha F. Graber. They will get as much as they can of each issue onto one 90-minute tape.

A 2½-month trial period (to the end of 1986) will tell us how much demand there is. Add your name and address. Send to Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

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☐ Yes, I want to sample one cassette tape of *The Mennonite* for $6 (U.S. or Canadian).

☐ Yes, I want to receive the next five issues of *The Mennonite* on cassette tape, beginning with the Oct. 28 issue. Enclosed is $25 for five tapes.

☐ I will likely become a regular subscriber to *The Mennonite* on tape.

More than 100 churches in the General Conference received $19,042 in congregational grants from Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind., in 1986. These Fraternal Activities grants, which are available each year to churches with MMA medical plan members, can be used for local benevolent funds or mutual aid projects. Congregations with at least 10 MMA medical plan members can apply for these grants. MMA pays $2 per member, with a minimum grant of $75.

Children from 22 schools lead worship service in Calcutta

Calcutta, India (MCC)—"It was inspiring to have children of different ethnic groups—Bengali, Mizo, Nagaland, East European and Chinese—and of different faiths—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians—participate," observes Peter H. Peters, member of Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg and India country representative for Mennonite Central Committee, which hosted an ecumenical service for Peace and Communal Harmony here in August.

More than 500 students from 22 schools presented songs, dramas, posters, banners and readings about peace to a standing-room only audience of more than 1,000 people at St. Paul's Cathedral.

The event, including hymns, prayers and Scripture readings conveying the Christian message of peace, was observed on the Sunday following India's independence day, Aug. 15. On that day in 1947 the British government partitioned British India into the dominions of India and Pakistan. In the months that followed more than 12 million Hindu and Muslim refugees crossed the India-Pakistan borders in a mass transferral, and about 200,000 people were killed in communal fighting.

It is important for India's citizens to talk and think about peace, observes Peters. "Today terrorist and communal activities are threatening the unity of the country. As a leader in the Non-Aligned Movement, India has made significant overtures to its neighboring countries to promote peaceful relations in this International Year of Peace."

Shirley Rodrigues, coordinator of MCC India's Educational Assistance Program that provided scholarships to 650 students in 34 schools in 1985, was the "driving force" behind the service at St. Paul's Cathedral, reports Peters. "We had excellent wholehearted cooperation" from the principals, staff and students, and the MCC staff, Peters reports.

Rodrigues had earlier written to principals of schools from many parts of India, asking them to have students express their ideas of peace in songs, poems, art and essays, explains Peters. The best of these will be printed in *My Vision*, a 75-page book to be released by Oxford University Press in Calcutta next month.

"The church service and book have generated interest in peace-teaching activities in the schools," continues Peters. "We of MCC India staff are grateful we could serve as a catalyst in this process."

MCC U.S. position

MCC is seeking applicants for a **two-year voluntary service position** in its Material Aid Center, Ephrata, Pa., as a **quilting operations supervisor**. Experience in sewing, marking quilt designs, knowledge of quilts and ability to work with people needed.

For more information contact:
MCC Personnel Department
21 S. 12th St.
Box M
Akron, PA 17501
(717) 859-1151.

Position opening

Administrative assistant position is open with **Mennonite World Conference** beginning **Dec. 1**. Qualifications include experience with transcribing dictation and word processing. Maturity and organizational skills are also important. Salaried position.

Contact:
Jane E. Friesen
Mennonite World Conference
528 E. Madison St.
Lombard, IL 60148
(312) 953-2320.

Youth pastor needed

Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church has an opening on its pastoral team for a person to focus on youth ministry. Position open immediately.

Contact:
Don Gunden
Pastoral Team Committee
409 S. Railroad St.
Myerstown, PA 17067.

Incomplete registration figures at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., showed a 7 percent increase in full-time enrollment over a year ago, according to Diana Torline, Bethel registrar. The head count, at 652 on Sept. 8, was expected to increase as part-time students registered for day and evening classes.

The meaning of business excellence from a Christian perspective will be the focus of the 1986 convention of Mennonite Economic Development Associates, to be held Nov. 6-9 in Kitchener, Ont. Keynote addresses, panel discussions and workshops will examine the theme "Business and Church: in Search of Excellence." Major input will be provided by J. Lawrence Burkholder, former Goshen (Ind.) College president. For more information contact MEDA, 402-280 Smith St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K2, (204) 944-1995.

Paul and Mary Lederach, Scottdale, Pa., have made a $25,000 endowment gift to Goshen Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., "to encourage excellence in preaching and to enrich and expand opportunities to teach and develop preaching skills at GBS/AMBS," the agreement says. Two-thirds of the available annual earnings will be used for scholarships in preaching and supervised experiences in preaching. One-third will be used for guest teachers in preaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, to supplement regular faculty, and a biennial lectureship that will include sermons and workshops on preaching.

Young people care about mission

Elkhart, Ind. (MBM)—Over 200 youth in the General Conference Mennonite Church and its sister denomination, the Mennonite Church, have involved themselves in service projects during the past year.

Jane Miller, director of Group Venture, says that the youth group projects ranged in length from a weekend to two weeks. Seventeen groups participated in Group Venture between March and August of this year; the other groups were involved in projects last summer and fall.

Group Venture and Youth Venture (service projects for individual youth, administered by Paula Diller Lehman) make up Mennonite Service Venture, sponsored by the Commission on Education and Mennonite Board of Missions. Miller says that participants in Group Venture have been predominantly from the Mennonite Church. "I hope more General Conference Mennonite youth will be involved as we enter our second year. We will offer more Canadian service locations."

"Group Venture gives youth a good introduction to service," says Miller. "They learn to know people who are different from themselves. Many of the groups indicate that the service projects have been a good group experience of working and traveling together. Youth are looking for ways to become involved in problems in the world. Group Venture offers them an opportunity to do something to help."

From Illinois to Texas. Larry and Jackie Smith led the five members of the youth group at Plow Creek Fellowship, Tiskilwa, Ill., on a one-week service project at Brownsville, Texas, in June. For three days the group helped the construction crew of the voluntary service unit paint and lay floor for a house. They also visited sites in Brownsville, gained insights into the Central American refugee situation, worshiped with the local Mennonite congregation in Brownsville, Iglesia Menonita del Cordero (the Mennonite Church of the Lamb), and took a side trip to Mexico.

Several of the youth said they learned much about the plight of the refugees. Many also appreciated the trip to Mexico because it gave them an opportunity to see and experience a different culture.

The youth group from Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind., spent six days in Evansville, Ind., in May with Patchwork Central, an ecumenical community organization. The five youth and sponsor Curt Kuhns did landscaping, grading, trench digging and brick laying at the new meetinghouse, tackled various chores and yard work at the local Catholic Worker house and served as volunteers in the after-school children's program.

> *"A valuable part of the experience was talking with others about their faith."*

One young person felt a valuable part of the experience was "talking with others about their faith." Another wrote that "working together (as a youth group) gave me a good feeling." Others appreciated the opportunity to get to know and help other people. Youth group relationships also benefited from the work project. One youth commented, "I learned to take care of things that come up and to talk it out, to not keep a grudge against someone."

Eight youth and sponsors Gary and Carolyn Gundy from Flanagan, Ill., traveled to Champaign, Ill., for a weekend in June planned by the Champaign voluntary service unit in conjunction with Group Venture. The youth group did shingling, siding and general clean-up for Empty Tomb (a Christian social service organization aiding the poor), took care of some filing, secretarial work and clothes sorting, and did some maintenance work around the VS house. Some youth worked at a day-care school painting and working with the children.

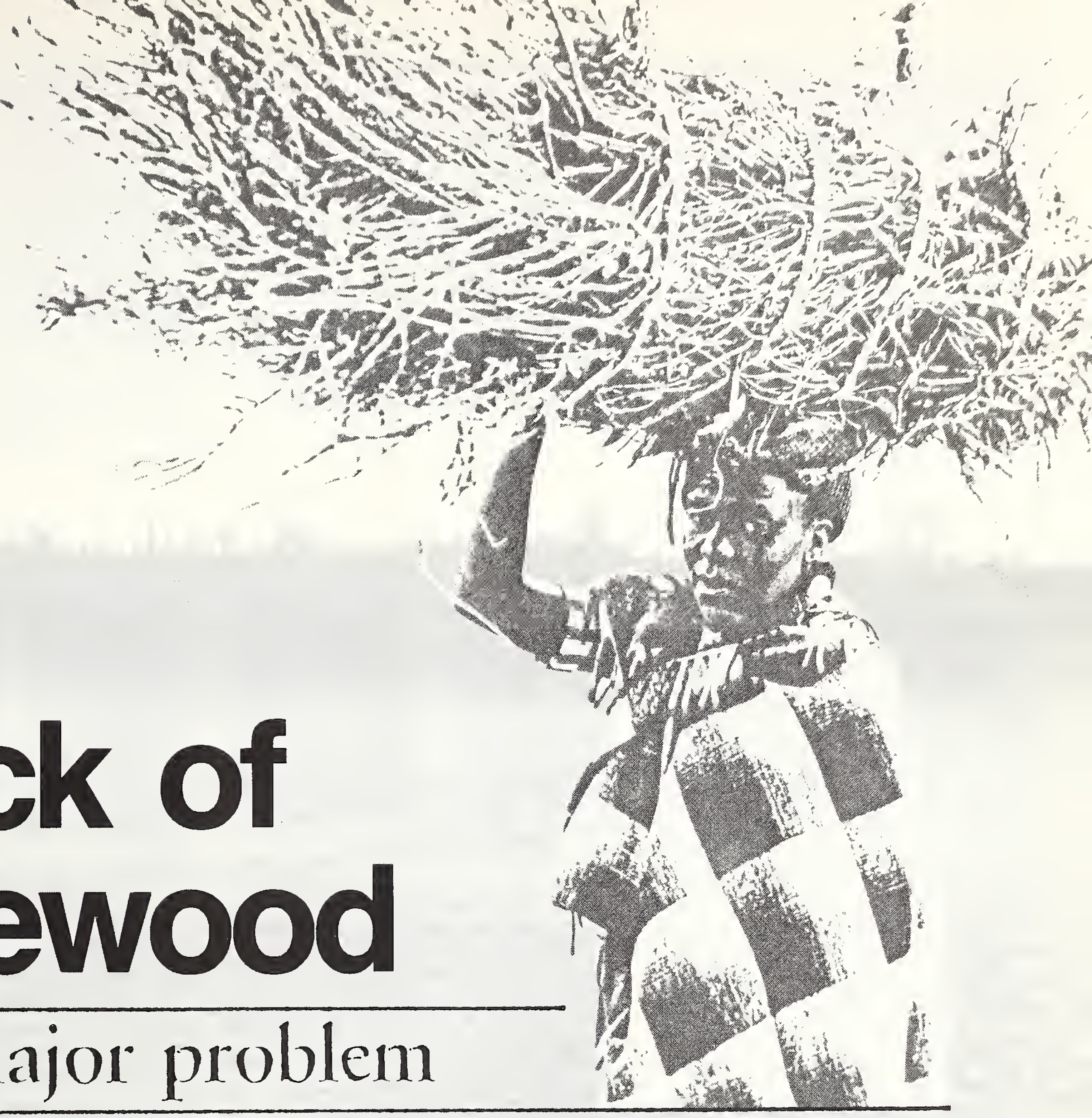
One teenager noted that a valuable part of the experience was meeting a person who didn't have a home. "It was the first time I'd met someone like that." One youth learned that "helping others can be fun." Another wrote, "We shouldn't take things for granted; we have a lot to be thankful for."

Sponsor Carolyn Gundy said the weekend work project "really brought our group closer together. They had never gone for a weekend like this before. They got to know each other and us a lot better. They also were shown that money isn't everything. People do have fun without a lot of money and they don't worry about it." Gary added, "The group was able to live and work together in an attitude of service. We saw people in need and areas where each of us could serve."

Miller and Lehman also emphasize that the service projects, both for youth groups and individuals, are available throughout the year, not just the summer months. For more information about Group Venture contact Jane Miller, MBM, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370, (219) 294-7523; for information about Youth Venture contact Paula Diller Lehman, COE, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100. *Phil Richard*

Women in many countries spend hours each day gathering twigs, dung or cropwaste to fuel their cooking fires. Forests worldwide are diminishing. Yet trees continue to be needed for fuel, lumber, fruit, preventing erosion, beauty and shade.

MCC works at forestation in more than 14 countries. Show your concern for the poor by choosing a forestation project for your holiday giving.



Lack of Firewood

is a major problem for women in developing countries.

- $250 buys a hand-operated pump for irrigating seedlings in Nigeria.
- In Sudan $15,000 is needed in a church-sponsored project that includes reforestation of desert land.
- $150 buys seeds and tools for a tree nursery in Kenya.
- In India a group of landless people has been given rocky land for settlement. $10,000 will help them plant 125,000 fruit, fuel and boundary trees.
- $1 will plant 14 trees in erosion-damaged Haiti.
- In Lebanon MCC is planting 150,000 trees this year. 39¢ plants one fruit tree; 65¢ one olive tree.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
Box M
Akron, PA 17501

MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9

Nancy and Harvey Harman work under Mennonite Central Committee with the Transkei Council of Churches in South Africa. One of the activities of the church organization is to support families of political prisoners and help these prisoners set up small businesses after their release.

Leaders from Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish and Protestant bodies met in New York July 25 and decided to write President Reagan requesting a White House meeting for 200 religious leaders on pornography. The group plans a larger meeting of religious leaders to further study and plan how America's religious community can work together to eliminate "illegal, obscene pornography—pornography which promotes the rape and degradation of women and that involves children sexually with adults and with one another," according to the National Association of Evangelicals.

The Kansas chapter of Mennonite Economic Development Associates will sponsor a series of lectures under the theme "The Christian Entrepreneur." The first lecture will be by L. M. Cornish of Topeka on "The Liability Crisis in Business" at the Red Coach Inn in Newton on Oct. 16. Two subsequent lectures will be offered later: On Jan. 15, 1987, Duane Friesen of Bethel College, North Newton, will speak on "The Ethics of Bankruptcy," and on April 2, 1987, Gerald Graham of Wichita State University will speak on "Secrets of Good Management." For further information call 1-800-362-2115.

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workers

Robert and *Dorothy Bartel*, Mennonite Fellowship of Rosthern, Sask., have begun a three-year Mennonite Central Committee Canada term as voluntary service coordinators in the Labrador program, based in Goose Bay. They will also carry the responsibility of working with native and disarmament concerns in the area. They received bachelor degrees from the University of Saskatchewan, Bob in mathematics and geography and Dorothy in elementary education. Her parents are John and Dora Friesen of Waldheim, Sask. They have two children, Megan and Robbie.

Lena Bergen, the first German-speaking Mexican Mennonite to participate in the International Visitor Exchange Program of MCC, is working at the Bethania Personal Care Home in Winnipeg.

John Burkholder, Assembly Church, Goshen, Ind., has begun a two-year MCC term in Goshen, where he is serving with MCC Peace Section as ecumenical peace theology consultant. His father is Clarence Burkholder of Goshen.

Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute announces the following new staff for the 1986-87 academic year: *Tim Castle*, instructor of New Testament and psychology; *Gary Daught*, instructor; *Elaine Epp*, assistant cook; *Don* and *Kathy Froese*, houseparents and instructors; *Cheryl Funk*, administrative assistant; *Peter Funk*, interim principal; *Irvine* and *Violet Manske*, maintenance and assistant cook.

Dorothy M. Dueck, Mennonite Fellowship of Rosthern, Sask., has begun a two-year MCCC term as a kindergarten and nursery teacher at a school for native children on the Tsulquate Reserve in Port Hardy, B.C. She received a degree in education from the University of Saskatchewan. Her parents are Peter and Elizabeth Epp of Rosthern. She has two daughters, Kara and Lisa.

Fitz-Hugh

C. Hayes

K. Hayes

Hertzler

Carl and *Hilda Schroeder Epp* returned to Canada in July from Taiwan, where they have served as General Conference Mennonite missionaries since 1972. Carl served as medical doctor at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hwalien, heading the department of internal medicine and serving as assistant medical director. Hilda worked in friendship evangelism.

Lynn Fitz-Hugh, Lake Forest (Ill.) Friends Meeting, began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term May 5 as a trainer/coordinator for the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program. She received a bachelor's degree in political science from Earlham College in Richmond, Ind. Her father is Ernie Fitz-Hugh.

Anna and *Jacob Friesen*, Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Church, have begun four-month MCC terms with SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa.

Elmer Friesen, pastor at Glendale Church, Lynden, Wash., served his last Sunday there Oct. 12.

David Habegger of North Newton, Kan., began serving Aug. 1 as part-time director of the Great Plains Seminary Education Program. He succeeds *Leland Harder*.

Ellwyn and *Ruth Hartzler*, Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, have begun five-month MCC terms with SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa. Ellwyn received a master's degree in elementary education from Bowling Green (Ohio) University. Ruth trained as a registered nurse at Bethel Deaconess Hospital in Newton, Kan.

Carol Hayes began a two-year MVS term July 28 as a teacher at the Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz. She received a bachelor's degree in art and education from the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay. Her mother is Mae Hayes of Green Bay.

Kelly Hayes, Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan., began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term Sept. 1 as a teacher at North High School in Wichita. He is continuing his regular employment and participating in MVS as a form of "sabbatical service." He received a bachelor's degree in math and English from Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kan. His parents are Wayne and Eula Hayes.

"Nuclear Deterrence and Our Security" is the theme of the Sixth Interchurch Conference on Peacemaking in a Nuclear Age, to be held Nov. 7-8 at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Wichita, Kan. Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, member of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' subcommittee studying deterrence, will be the keynote speaker. Dorothea Janzen, copastor at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan., will lead a Bible study entitled "God: Our Strength and Security." The conference will also include 36 workshops, a peace party and film festival, a program for ages 4-14 and a nursery for children under 4.

Many hospitals in Laos are more poorly equipped than the medicine cabinet in the average North American home. And these hospitals are inaccessible to many people. The Lao government, which has adopted the United Nations mandate of "health for all by the year 2000," is showing greater interest in rural-based health programs, says Lois Foehringer, Mennonite Central Committee country representative there. MCC is providing building materials and some basic supplies and medicines for five village health posts in southern Laos.

Mennonite Central Committee and five other non-governmental organizations in the Philippines sponsored a national consultation in prostitution June 13-14. The people at the Manila conference talked about the history of prostitution in the Philippines, the tourist industry and its sex-package tours and the prostitution associated with two U.S. military bases in the Philippines. "The church is responsible to liberate people from exploitive structures," noted one speaker.

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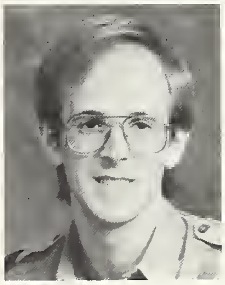
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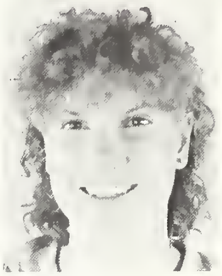
Scheckel

Schmidt

Teresa Hertzler, Hively Avenue Church, Elkhart, Ind., has begun a one-year term of Voluntary Service with Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, as a support person for Overground Railroad at San Benito, Texas. She is a graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College. Her parents are Joe and Mary Hertzler of Elkhart.

Galen Hofer, Hutterthal Church, Freeman, S.D., began a two-year MVS term April 14 as project director for Denver Habitat for Humanity. He received a bachelor's degree in industrial arts education from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. His parents are Darlene and Norman Hofer of Freeman.

Solomon Janzen, Neuanlage Grace Church, Hague, Sask., has begun a two-year MCCC term with Anishinabe RESPECT, a native Canadian organization in Winnipeg. As an employment counselor, he is helping core-area residents find jobs. He received a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Saskatchewan. His parents are Abram and Gertrude Janzen of Hague.

Joseph L. Lapp, Lansdale, Pa., will become the seventh president of Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., on July 1, 1987.

D. Miller

T. Miller

Greg Lichti, Listowel (Ont.) Church, began a two-year MVS term Sept. 2 as an advocate for the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization in Winnipeg. He received a bachelor's degree in history and applied studies from the University of Waterloo, Ont. His parents are David and Mary Ann Lichti of Brussels, Ont.

Leroy Loepp, Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill., began a two-year MVS term as a van driver for the Inter-Faith Ministries Project Give-a-Lift in Wichita, Kan. His parents are Dorothy and Franzie Loepp of Normal.

Diane and *Tony Miller*, Kalona (Iowa) Church, began 1½-year terms Feb. 20 as staff aid and teacher, respectively, at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz. Tony has a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Va. His parents are Edwin and Mary Jane Miller, and hers are Carolyn and Leslie Kinsinger, all of Wellman, Iowa.

Linda Miller, Central Church, Archbold, Ohio, began a one-year MVS term May 12 as a child-care worker at the Beatrice (Neb.) Day Care Center. Her parents are Ervin and Lois Miller of Archbold.

Teresa Scheckel, Olivet Church, Clearbrook, B.C., began a one-year MVS term as a child-care worker at the Friendship Day Care Center in Hutchinson, Kan. Her parents are Erna and Raymond Scheckel.

Brad Schmidt, Free Methodist Church, McPherson, Kan., began a two-year MVS term on staff at the Lorraine Center in Wichita, Kan. His parents are LeRoy and Vicki Schmidt of McPherson.

Manager couple needed for Mennonite Central Committee gift-and-thrift store in Denver. People skills. Two-year commitment. Compensation similar to voluntary service wages.

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It isn't a tragedy.

Doug Penner was, as far as one could see, a normal teenager. He'd be up before 6 driving tractor before school. He'd pay early-morning horseback visits to his music teacher. Mechanical things fascinated him. When not working, he'd ride motorcycle in the canyons near his hometown, Dinuba, California.

At 16, Doug came down with Valley Fever-meningitis. The next 8 years, he lived with pain, disability, and deafness. At times he fought for his life.

Doug's mother, Margaret, says, "We didn't know what we were in for. We've lived one day at a time . . . and the Lord has always given us strength."

Dinuba and Reedley Mennonite Brethren churches stood by Doug and his family. They prayed for him; they fixed food and paid medical bills. After one of Doug's bouts with illness, they readied the house for his return in a wheelchair. To ease the financial burden, Mennonite Mutual Aid gave Catastrophe Aid grants.

In spite of the pain, Margaret says, **Doug's smile and Christian witness affected many around him—especially medical staff.** Now he's done fighting with pain . . . triumphantly. Doug died one spring evening, at age 24.

Doug's story is sad . . . but it's not a tragedy. His life showed God's love to friends, family, and church. Thanks for your part in the story . . . by sharing through MMA programs.

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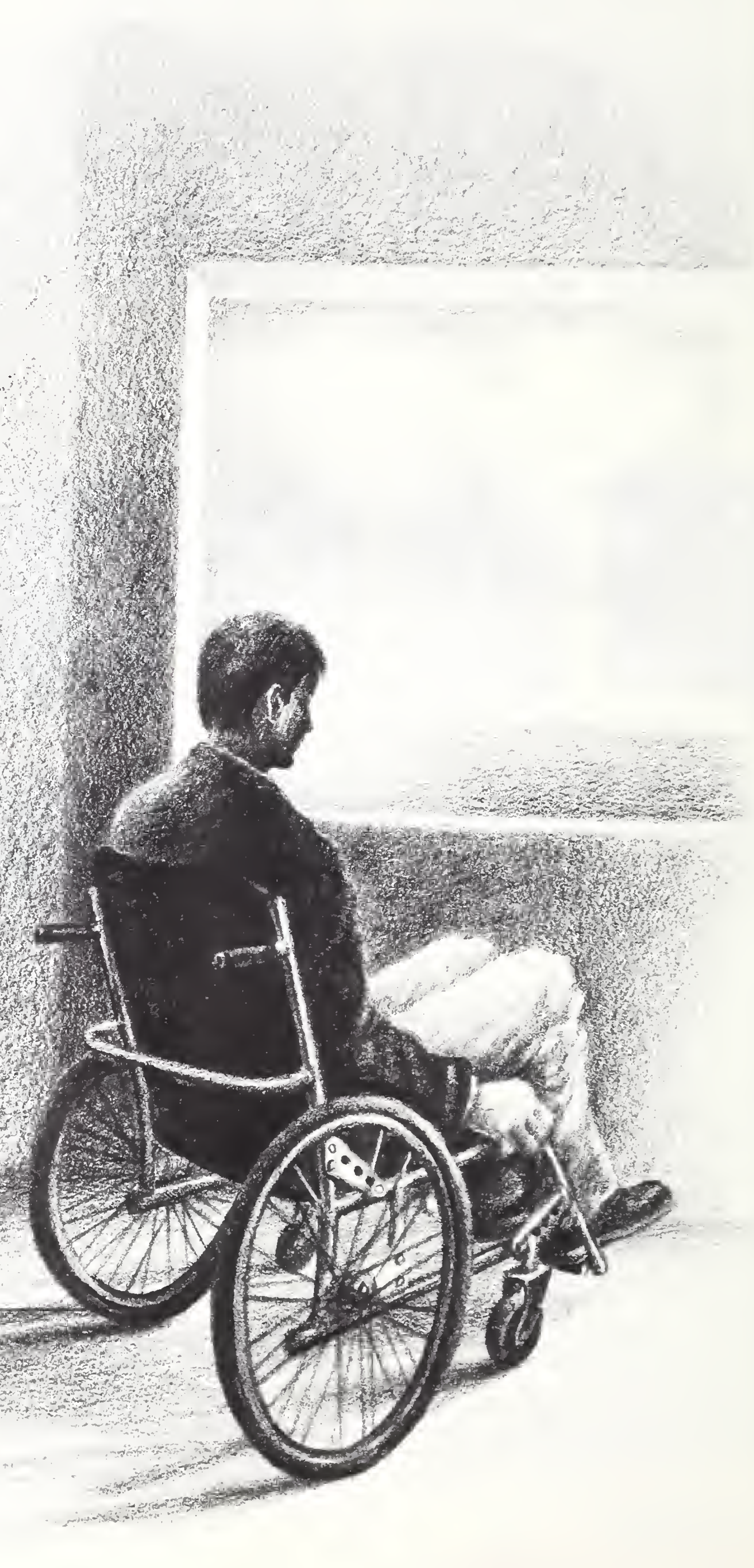


Illustration by Nick Antonakis

LETTERS

Deeply moved

I was deeply moved by the image of the crucified Christ (May 27 issue) being so closely identified with one of the oppressed classes of society. It was particularly meaningful for me since I was also forced to identify myself as one of the oppressors. Similarly I must acknowledge that part of myself which is responsible for the rejection of Christ's full gospel. *Keith Friesen Penner, 1818 Prairie St., Elkhart, IN 46516*

Aug. 5

Thanks for caring

I'd just like to take a minute to thank all the readers who send in contributions so that people like me who cannot afford to send any money for a subscription can still have the pleasure of reading a decent, truthful magazine.

Being in prison and only able to earn or receive from $9 to $21 a month, there is not enough money to get myself extras very often.

I honestly do enjoy the articles of *The Mennonite*. So I say again, thanks to all who helped pay for my subscription. To be honest, I only thought I'd receive a copy or two, but I've received five issues so far.

From an incarcerated brother in Christ who made a mistake and is paying for it. This just proves to me that our God does love us and protects us also. *Steve(n) E. McKelvy, #34885 K.S.P., Box 2, Lansing, KS 66043*

Aug. 5

Editor's note: Just over $350 in contributions from readers have made it possible for us to provide subscriptions to The Mennonite *to prison inmates. If you would like to add to this ministry, send designated gifts to Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Correction to *Kingdom Builder*

Saskatoon '86's newsletter, *The Kingdom Builder*, was a great help in spreading news of what was happening at the conference. The last issue, however, editorialized that an amendment presented by the Assembly Mennonite Church "left open the question of whether homosexual practice was right or wrong."

The editorial in *The Kingdom Builder* is misleading about Assembly's intent, even though the statement is technically correct. The intent of our amendment was to simply recognize the disagreements within our conference. Our congregation disagrees on the issue, just as the conference as a whole disagrees. We agreed to disagree, however, so the rest of the resolution (which says many good things we *do* agree on) could be passed with a good conscience. *Byron Weber-Becker, 3100 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517*

Aug. 6

Bearing one another's burdens

In my hallway hangs an embroidery designed by one of the leaders of the church in a refugee camp in Central America. One of the images portrayed in it is that of Christ crucified. Jesus is there shown as a Salvadoran peasant farmer. The woman who drew this on the cloth (formerly a sack for MCC flour from Kansas) was in no way challenging scriptural authority. She knows that Jesus was of Nazareth, not El Salvador. Yet she portrayed her Lord as one of her own people in order to express the gospel truth that Jesus is relevant. The cross of Christ is important to her people and situation because Jesus not only bore the weight of sin 2,000 years ago but also suffers the pain of oppression with them today. Because of this truth they can and do persistently cling to the hope of resurrection.

I do not know what Edwina Sandys was thinking when she used her creative gifts to sculpture Jesus in a way that some have regrettably found offensive (July 8 letters). I am sure she was *not* trying to imply Jesus of Nazareth was a woman. To me the work expressed something similar to that of the Salvadoran peasant on the cross. That is, the Good News of Jesus is indeed relevant . . . even to women. On the cross Jesus bore our every grief and sorrow . . . even those effects of sin's worldly reign that are weighty burdens especially or only on women.

I am sorry to read that an image which successfully communicates an important aspect of the Good News of Jesus Christ to me, offends some of my beloved sisters and brothers. I believe it is essential for the well-being of the church that each of us work hard to see from the others' point of view so that we too might bear one another's burdens. *Carol Rose, 3003 Benham, Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517*

Aug. 6

Good for the conference

Re: the Call to Kingdom Commitments, how exciting to reach for a goal that may seem out of reach in view of past performance: $17.5 million for mission!

I love those little quilt patches. They remind me of my friend Bob in California. The little cloth medallion hanging around the neck is a powerful tool in the hands of the Spirit to loosen the purse strings. Once you consent to wearing it around your neck it is much harder to say no to the project. You see by wearing it you are already committed. Gimmicks like that really work. I'm glad the Mennonites are finally catching on and getting with it. It used to be tough to just present the need and trust the Lord to move people's hearts to give.

The fund drive is going to be good for our conference. Hopefully a few pet projects can be weeded out to permit an even greater focus of mission and evangelism. The principle of projecting a fund for a specified project is biblical. I once thought that people gave when their heart was in the cause, but I believe it is the other way around; our heart follows our investment. When I buy a new car, I spend time with it, I polish it, my heart is devoted to it. The family that invests in a cabin in the mountains follows that investment, devoting time and energy to it.

One delegate at the conference said that to accomplish this goal will demand a radical change in our lifestyle. I'm willing to make that radical change. I know that averages don't work—those of us with the vision will need to give much more than the average.

I had the habit of stopping for that one cup of coffee midmorning and then again between lunch and dinner. In the United States that averages at least $1 per day. Suppose each of us were willing to make a radical change in lifestyle and drop those two cups of coffee for the Call to Kingdom Commitments. We are about 65,000 strong. The $1 per day by the next triennial sessions, instead of being $17 million, would be $71 million.

So is it possible? If God is in it, then of course it's possible. "All things are possible with God" (Matthew 10:27). *Norman J. Schmidt, 1101 Columbus Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446*

Aug. 27

Designing for church growth

Ken Peterson

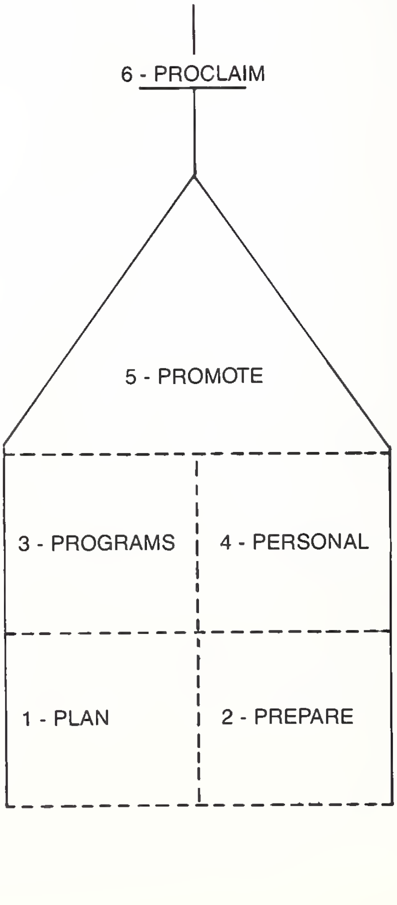
Last year in summer we flew to New York for a family reunion. Staying at my sister and husband's home in upstate New York for part of our time, we were excited to see Barb and Harry's new home overlooking the Mohawk River in a semirural area. They had first shared with us the dream of such a home. Then they designed their own home in consultation with the architect. They also helped with the construction. Now they showed us the plans that preceded the construction, and pictures of the process. This beautiful home uniquely designed for their needs and desires was far from an accident. The structure was well planned in the general outline and in specific details.

Church buildings are also well designed. Building committees are formed for months and often years of planning. An architect makes sketches to consider, then comes up with detailed plans.

We need to give the same time and effort to the designing of our plans for reaching out with the Good News in Christ. Our outreach ministry will be more effective if it is purposefully structured into our church organization and life. In every congregation this design will be unique to its own setting. The structuring will not completely predict exactly what will happen or who will be won to Christ and his church. Church growth requires a great deal of flexibility. It is an unpredictable activity. We can be intentional, however, about church growth. Planning will make many things happen that would otherwise never happen.

Our churches are already designed for our life together. We have church councils and boards, committees, pastoral roles, planned sermons, prepared Sunday school lessons and bulletins designed to guide our worship. Churches are highly organized. This means what we wish to happen will likely happen in our congregation.

Designing our congregations for winning new people will also make church growth happen. Church councils, boards or committees can purposely take time to plan for church growth, just as other agenda items are planned. Along with the maintenance details for a new roof on the building, outreach items can be added to the agenda. Some things happen spontaneously in the church and in outreach. We can even encourage spontaneity by planning.



Here are *six Ps in "Designing for church growth."* (1) *Plan.* Make outreach intentional in your church by regular planning in official organizational channels. Write down ideas, set specific dates on the calendar for outreach activities, get commitments from people in your church. Plan for church growth, then plan some more for growth, then continue to plan for growth. (2) *Prepare.* Take time to train people in church growth concepts. Prepare the congregation for winning new people. Hold workshops, spend time in prayer and continually orient the leadership and the congregation in how to be involved in this mission. (3) *Programs.* Consider the non-churched people you wish to reach and design programs that will speak to their interests and needs. Programs based on an understanding of non-churched people will bring results. Specific programs make our love for people specific. (4) *Personal.* Continually remember that people matter to God. Show an interest in people and you will interest them in the gospel. Planning, preparing and programming must be centered in personal attention to people. (5) *Promote.* People are unlikely to have a special vision of our church. We need to tell them about our church. Promote your church by letting people know what you have to offer. (6) *Proclaim.* Our goal is to win people to God's love in Christ and involve them in a continuing relationship with the church. Our sermons, Sunday school classes, Bible studies and one-on-one sharing need to proclaim God's invitation to relationship. New people will need to have opportunity to learn of our God-given message in an atmosphere of accepting love and challenging hope of a new life in Christ.

Ken Peterson is the pastor at Calvary Mennonite Church, 6711 S. Lone Elder Road, Aurora, OR 97009.

From Russia to Japan

Mary Derksen

Left to right: Kuroda Sensei and Jacob Esau with Mary and Peter Derksen. It was a unique and blessed experience to have someone from the Soviet Union (now in West Germany) come and preach the gospel here in Japan.

It was two weeks before our big Honda Crusade. Not the best time for a guest speaker—we thought. As it turned out, Jacob Esau was God's timely messenger sent to begin reviving our tired church before the evangelistic meetings. Esau, from West Germany, and his Japanese interpreter, Kuroda, arrived in Beppu on Saturday, May 17.

Kuroda had spent 12 years in Germany, at first studying dentistry, then for six years as pastor of Japanese Christians. During this time he had become acquainted with Anabaptists who had fled Russia and resettled in Germany. Here he also became concerned for the many Baptists and Mennonites in prisons in Siberia for their faith. When he returned to Wakayama, Japan, as a pastor, he also founded Voice of Mission. By this means he supports persecuted Christians in Russia and keeps Japanese churches informed of conditions there.

He often invites pastors, now in West Germany, who have been in Soviet prison camps, to share their experiences here. One of those invited was my cousin, David Klassen, brother to Rudolph Klassen, still in prison in Siberia. David Klassen had spent 10 years in prisons. On his visit to Japan we invited him to Oita. People who came to the Oita Mennonite Church had a hard time believing conditions could be that severe for Christians in the Soviet Union. Later I went to Fukuoka to hear him again. There I first met Kuroda Sensei, interpreter for Klassen. We kept in touch.

This spring Kuroda let us know about Jacob Esau and scheduled meetings in our church for May 17-18. We accepted somewhat reluctantly because of our special evangelistic meetings with Koji Honda two weeks later.

Jacob Esau told our children how Soviet Christians are officially forbidden to teach their children about God. That is difficult for us in free Japan to understand. During "reihai" (worship service) Esau spoke on the text "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled" (Luke 12:49 *NIV*). A fitting text for Pentecost! First he talked about the disciples' Pentecost experience and how the Lord allowed persecution so Christians would obey his command to "go and tell all nations." That is what happened in the Soviet Union. He said that if the Lord had told him, "Go and preach the gospel in Siberia"—even if it had been allowed—he would have said, "No, Lord, it's much too cold there." But God wanted him to preach in Siberia. "So God arranged for the Soviet government to pay my trip. They also gave me free room and board. And he gave me many opportunities to witness to prisoners and officials alike about the saving grace of Christ."

That afternoon we were crowded out (80 people). The "genkan" (entrance) was so full that people went home disappointed because they couldn't get in. We laughed and cried as we listened to Esau. He shared some ironic situations, where prison officials would take Bibles away and then secretly pour over them. Or sell them on the black market. We cried at the persecutions.

He shared how Christ had answered his prayers again and again to be able to keep his Bible. Prison wardens conducted regular searches in the rooms. Once a guard on a search came to his bunk, where he and another inmate had just been reading the Bible. Hastily they slipped it under his pillow. But the guard found it and asked what it was. "The Bible," Esau answered. Quietly the guard slipped it back under his pillow.

That evening Esau spoke to another large audience in the Immanuel Church. Here he told about the risks Christians take for their faith. Some have presses in their homes for printing Christian literature. When one woman in Western Europe heard that Bibles were scarce in the Soviet Union, she loaded her car with Bibles and covered them up. Then she headed for the border. But border control was strict. She got closer and closer. Then a customs official began counting cars and stopped at hers. Fear gripped her heart. They asked her to get out and, to her astonishment, handed her a big bouquet of flowers. A fanfare of trumpets greeted her. Hers was the millionth car to cross the border and as such she could cross without inspection. A miracle.

Our Soviet Christian brothers and sisters are used to miracles. But they are also used to persecution. Our church found it a good challenge to take our Christian task more sincerely.

Mary Derksen, 4 Kumi, Minami Ishigaki-cho, Beppu-shi, Oita-ken, Japan 874, is a General Conference missionary in Japan.

House church manual

Building the House Church *by Lois Barrett (Herald Press, 1986, 176 pages)*

Reviewed by David Habegger, 2713 Goldenrod Road, North Newton, KS 67117

Here is a practical book for house churches and any congregation that has or is planning for small groups. Based on 10 years of involvement in a house church, serious biblical and theological reflection at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, and the knowledge that came from having edited a newsletter for house churches, Lois Barrett is uniquely qualified for writing this book.

The house church is defined as "a group of people small enough to meet face-to-face who have covenanted with God and each other to be the church under the authority of Christ and the guidance of the Spirit" (p. 18). What is seen as essential is "a commitment to Christ and to discipling each other in the way of Christ through worship, teaching, sharing, deciding and mission" (p. 158). There is the recognition that house churches exist in a variety of forms and that each is unique, depending on the individuals who make up the group and the resulting dynamics.

Small groups in any church will benefit from studying this book. There are many illustrations of what other groups have experienced that are suggestive for developing strong group life. An example of how she also uses current ideas is found in the chapter "Teaching and Learning." Here she writes about the ways in which the left half of our brains function differently from the right half and the implications of this for our study of the Bible.

Very useful are the ideas of how children fit into a church. Guidelines are given for how a story or other special activity for children should be done. Barrett emphasizes that "faith is more caught than taught" and that we should assume in all of our teaching that people are in process.

The common denominator of house churches is the use of a covenant to unify and give direction. For any small group to survive there needs to be a sense of intentionality, of purpose. Instruction is given on the process of developing a covenant and four sample covenants are included.

The Anabaptist perspective on the Bible and the church are integral to each of the chapters. In the chapter "Discipling" the focus is first placed on the meaning of being committed to following Jesus Christ. Each chapter of the book includes thoughtful discussion questions that groups can use for getting into the essentials of the material. In the chapter "Mission" the question raised is, "What is the mission of your church? How can it better show the presence of Christ in the world?"

The bibliography that is included will be of help to those who want to read more widely about the house church and small groups.

Feminism—good and bad

What's Right with Feminism *by Elaine Storkey (Eerdmans, 1986, 183 pages)*

Reviewed by Ardie S. Goering, Box 234, Goessel, KS 67053

The title is a provocative one, particularly since the book is clearly rooted in a biblical perspective of this controversial subject. And British author Elaine Storkey does deliver an emphatic argument for Christian feminism. But the book might be more aptly titled "What's Wrong with Feminism," since Storkey spends so much time criticizing the historical and current women's movement.

After briefly outlining what she considers the legitimate reasons for feminism, Storkey describes and critiques what she calls the three main secular feminist perspectives. Liberal feminism centers on political rights and strives for change by working within our educational and legal systems. Marxist feminists believe that capitalism is inherently patriarchal and focus on economic reform. Finally, radical feminism sees the need for sweeping changes in the power structures of work, home, government and church.

Storkey accurately pinpoints self-determination as the root of most feminist thought. But this is what she finds objectionable. Human autonomy is personhood without God, she writes, and therefore non-existent. The equality of women and men is mandated primarily by our mutual sinfulness and our common need for God's redemption.

What's Right with Feminism attempts to place the entire women's movement in a Christian perspective. It's a demanding task, particularly in 183 pages. The book suffers from shallow analyses. Storkey's brief dismissal of other religious perspectives, what she calls "broadly-Christian feminism" and "post-Christian feminism," seems particularly unfortunate.

While containing some valuable insights of Christian feminism, the book's central point is disappointing. Autonomy is not necessarily a denial of God but an acceptance of the choices we have. Fulfillment of selfhood can be an integral part of God-centered living.

Knowing God

Prayer and the Pursuit of Happiness *by Richard Harries (Eerdmans, 1985, 154 pages)*

Reviewed by Terry Stutzman, 14 LaTeer Drive, Normal, IL 61761

In this book Richard Harries investigates the most basic human needs: happiness, peace, fulfillment, success, security and love.

Chapter one, "Starting where you want," helps those of us who may have trouble admitting our needs to ourselves and to others. ". . . our wants are not to be ignored or trodden down or rejected as 'selfish,' " Harries writes. "They are vital." The author supports the idea that wanting and prayer are intimately connected. Our want of happiness is bound up naturally in the way we were created. The way we search for happiness is an integral part of Christian life.

The author encourages an awareness of love to first include a recognition of God within ourselves. What follows is the recognition of God's love in others and in the events, both "good" and "bad," which touch our lives. Such an awareness cannot be achieved without prayer.

Each chapter closes with a prayer, and in all but the last Harries provides thought-provoking questions for discussion. In this format the book is an effective aid for pulling us into times of prayer and reflection.

This book is helpful for Christians who want to refine their dependency on a personal God as the main—the only—source of human security. "The way to be happy is to know God better; to live closer to Him; to love Him more."

MEDITATION

Salt in our church library

"How did the sack with the box of salt and used candles get left in the library?" I wondered. Sifting through the assortment of lost-and-found items made me feel more like a janitor than a church librarian. I was frustrated. Taking care of lost-and-found was not the librarian's job. Truth of the matter was, the salt in 10 years of work as a librarian was losing its flavor.

Disposing of the unclaimed items, I tossed the candles in the wastebasket, mumbled under my breath, "The salt belongs in the kitchen cupboard," and headed for the kitchen. My feet moved as quickly as my temper flared.

Crossing the fellowship hall, my shoes squeaked loud enough to challenge my thinking. "This freshly waxed floor is cleaner than my kitchen floor," I thought. "I must remember to thank our janitors. Their job must also lose its flavor after a while."

Back in the library I tried to think of a new book display. "Does anyone notice the books on the counter are changed?" I wondered. That question was answered faster than I could think of books to pull from the shelves. Someone came in with an overdue book, then said, "Do you know how I happened to check out the book?"

"No," I replied.

"I noticed it on display."

I realize whatever we do should be done unto the Lord. That is difficult to remember when we're angry. Each job is essential to the total work of the church.

A week later I was back in the library checking its appearance. Located at the entrance of the church, books need to be orderly—especially with guests coming for a funeral the following day. While there, a woman entered the building to attend a meeting. Noting my presence, she asked for assistance. "Can you help me find a book that was on display last week? It's no longer here." While I located the book in the card file, she expressed her gratitude for use of the library, since her church doesn't have one. By now the salt in my job was so flavorful I was thirsty.

True service is doing whatever work needs to be done. Richard J. Foster says in *Celebration of Discipline*, "True service comes from a relationship with the divine." He says the contrast is, "Self-righteous service which is impressed with the 'big deal.'. . . True service ministers simply and faithfully because there is a need."

A youth minister describing his work said, "They didn't tell me in college my job would include maintenance work." Whether a person is a janitor, a church librarian or a youth minister, it's the salt or the flavor of the Christian's work that is a glowing light to the world. Salt preserves in discouraging and rewarding times. When salt stands out, it does not blend naturally. It may reflect anger or lack of interest.

In God's eyes, thankless jobs do not exist. Saltless jobs do. Matthew 5:13 says, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?" It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men" (*NIV*).

Donna Lehman

CONTENTS

Many people on this earth remain "strangers" their whole life long. The refugee count in the world holds steady at about 10 million. Others feel alone, left out, never at ease or at peace.

As people of God we have a unique mission to such people. Matthew 25 seems to suggest that on the Final Day we will have to give account of how we dealt with the foreigners, the prisoners, the hungry, the naked, the lonely—people in need.

This issue is dedicated to encourage us and to help us "welcome the strangers."

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Cover, Victor Neumann (MCC); 438, Sandra Liechty; 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 448, RNS; 446, Muriel T. Stackley; 446 (top), Joel Kauffman; 447, Jim King (MCC); 448, Linda Shelly (MCC); 449, Peter H. Peters (MCC).

THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, OH 45817; Pacific District, Carol Peterson, 25956 S. Rhoten Road, Aurora, OR 97002; Western District, Debbie Huxman, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; Window to Mission, Lois Deckert, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Richard A. Kauffman, 3003 Benham Ave. Elkhart, IN 46517.

EDITORIAL

Make room for strangers

The world's refugee problem has not changed much over the last 10 years. There are about the same 10 million homeless today as then.

But we have changed our response to the refugees. When the "boat people" shown on TV in the late '70s drew our attention to the plight of these destitute people, our hearts melted, our pocketbooks opened and Mennonites—in many cases—set examples for others to follow.

We saw these "strangers" (Matthew 25:35b) and we "welcomed" them.

Ministering to such strangers is time-consuming, frustrating and endless. The sea of refugees is so great that our early enthusiasm scarcely rippled the water.

It has ever been so. Some dreamers, who proposed the first missionaries, felt we'd evangelize the world within 100 years. Now we see a world population of 5 billion and over half of them have never personally met a Christian. That task also is endless.

See Jesus in the strangers. How can we keep a burning zeal to reach out? To evangelize those who have never heard of Jesus? To provide food, clothing, shelter and education for the millions who are homeless and poor?

At the July 17-20 Mennonite Medical Convention, Estes Park, Colo., Stanley Godshall, a doctor who has spent much of his career serving the poor in Africa, said a modern interpretation of the Golden Rule is, "He who has the gold makes the rule." He also said that to know Jesus better we must look for him among the poor.

For us who live in modern suburbs, this may seem farfetched. But remember Matthew 25. When Jesus spoke of welcoming the stranger, the people—both right and left—wanted to know when and where. Jesus said, "As you did to the least of my brothers (and sisters), you did to me" (Matthew 25:40, 45).

The strangers, the refugees, the empty, the hungry, the hurting are in every church and in every community. Many people, like the church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22), are "wretched, poor, pitiable, blind and naked" (v. 17b) without knowing it. Others, like Job in his despair, know it well.

I have known it too. When our son, Glen, gave up his life five years ago, I felt like dirt and dung. It was as if the sun stood still. And I told all of you about it.

You—the total GC family—encircled this refugee with love and compassion like I'd never seen before. That made it possible to go on. There still is pain, but I know I'm not alone.

Your making room for this "stranger" has made it possible for me to tell thousands that there is hope also for them.

Love is like that. Invest it in people and it multiplies.

As we make room for strangers—next door and around the world—our lives become fuller. And one day Jesus will say to us, "I was the stranger and you welcomed me." *Bernie Wiebe*

Auf Wiedersehen (Farewell)

This issue is my last as editor. My first was Oct. 19, 1976. Now I pass the pen on to Muriel Thiessen Stackley.

Farewells are not my forte and I don't have any last profound words. Thank-you for the privilege of serving our GC family for this decade. Thank-you for calling me to account when you felt I needed it. Thank-you for the overwhelming support all along.

I have enjoyed it so much that I felt it was not "work."

Muriel, welcome to one of the neatest (oh yes, not always rosy) jobs in the General Conference.

I am working with the Mennonite Studies Centre, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9.

God bless us all together! *Bernie Wiebe*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID.

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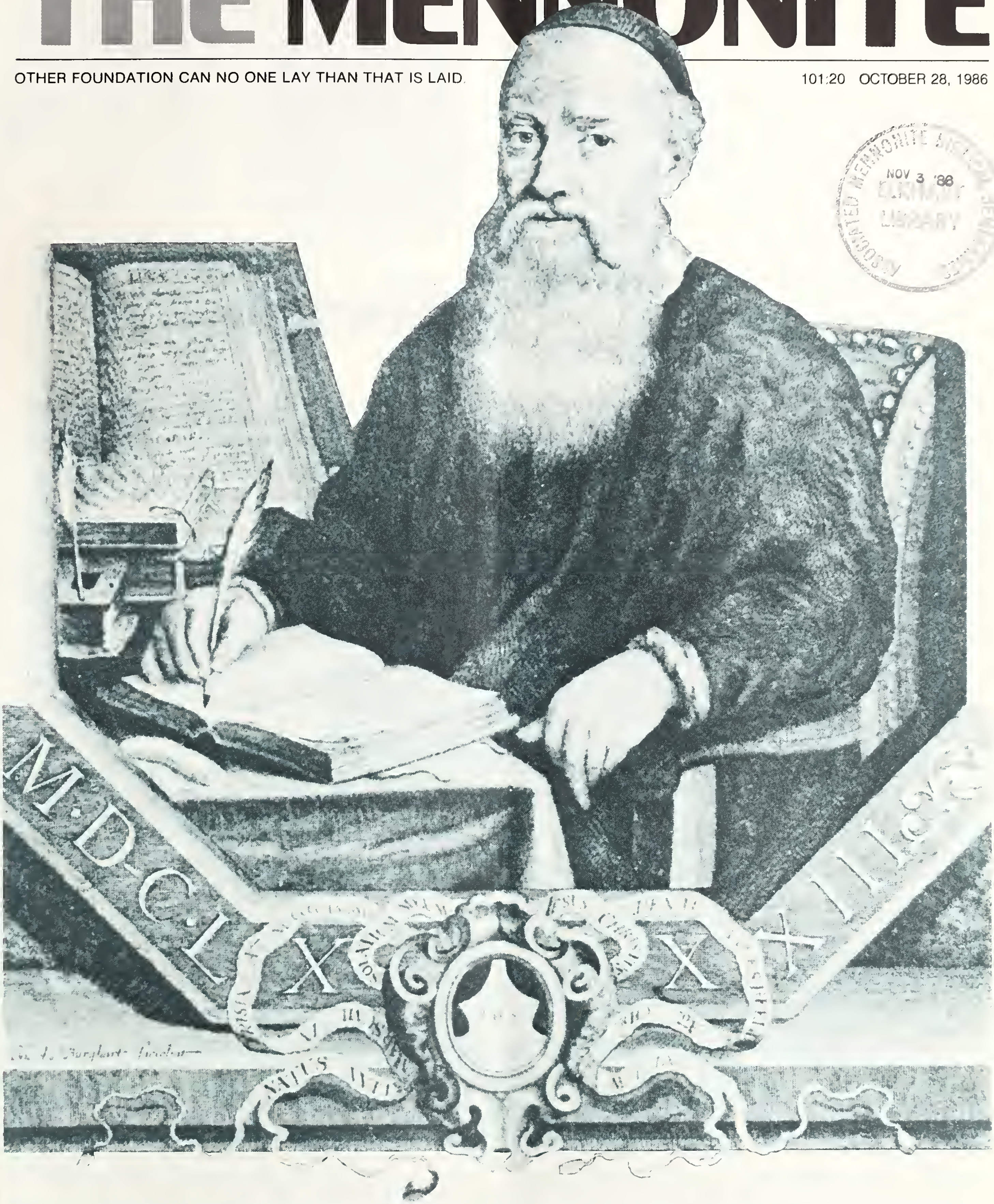

The church is based on committed discipleship,
and discipleship starts with a commitment to Christ.
—Menno Simons

THE MENNONITE

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and discipleship starts with a commitment to Christ.
—Menno Simons

Menno Simons, 1496-1561, was the most outstanding Anabaptist leader of the Low Countries in the 16th century. At age 28 he entered the Roman Catholic priesthood, and seven years later he was convinced that believer's baptism was scriptural. He left the priesthood in 1836 and became a hunted man, consenting to give leadership to the "re-baptizers."

prologue

Reformation Day, Oct. 31, invites us to look backward and then—very quickly—forward. Wally Goossen, in the first article, helps us do both.

When I talked to Wally by telephone at the beginning of October, I sensed in him a love for the church and in particular for the General Conference Mennonite Church. Listen to him, and then, if you feel led, respond. Dialogue is, as you know, welcomed in these pages.

Joanne Lehman ("A Reconciliation in Ohio") translates some of Wally's thoughts into what's familiar to us: the local church. We as a body of believers are slowly learning to see conflict as a setting for learning, God being our helper. Joanne's story—a testimony—will inspire you as it did me to enter into the life of our congregations with hope and love even when (or especially when) those congregations are in disagreement.

Our anonymous writer from "out there" extends a hand to those of us "closer in." Remember us, the writer says, in effect; some of us care very much about our roots. Perhaps your reading of "A View from the Mennonite Diaspora" will bring to mind someone with whom you would like to renew contact.

Weeden Nichols (see page 480) knows the value of the parable—and didn't Jesus teach us that? You won't soon forget Weeden's wisdom surrounding "chickenhood."

That brings me to Lois Deckert's meditation inside the back cover. Lois speaks to an aspect of our conference that is unique: "Congregational polity" is the fancy term, and it simply means that member congregations of the General Conference Mennonite Church have some say-so of their own. Having acknowledged the lordship of Jesus Christ and committed ourselves to membership in the conference, our 367 congregations have freedom of operation. The conference does not dictate to the congregations. That's risky but also life-giving. We enrich each other. *mts*

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Credits: The Menno Simons quotations with Wally Goossen's article are from the September 1986 issue of *Mennonite Mirror*, quoting Menno's *Opera Omnia* (Lebenswerk). Cover, Jacobus Burghart engraving from Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; 463, 464, *Martyrs Mirror*; 465, Joshua So; 466, 467, Joanne Lehman; 468, Dan Gerber; 470, MWC; 471, COM; 473, D. Martens (MCC); 480, 481, John Hiebert; 483, Brenda Suderman.

THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, OH 45817; Pacific District, Carol Peterson, 25956 S. Rhoten Road, Aurora, OR 97002; Western District, Debbie Huxman, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; Window to Mission, Lois Deckert, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Richard A. Kauffman, 3003 Benham Ave. Elkhart, IN 46517.

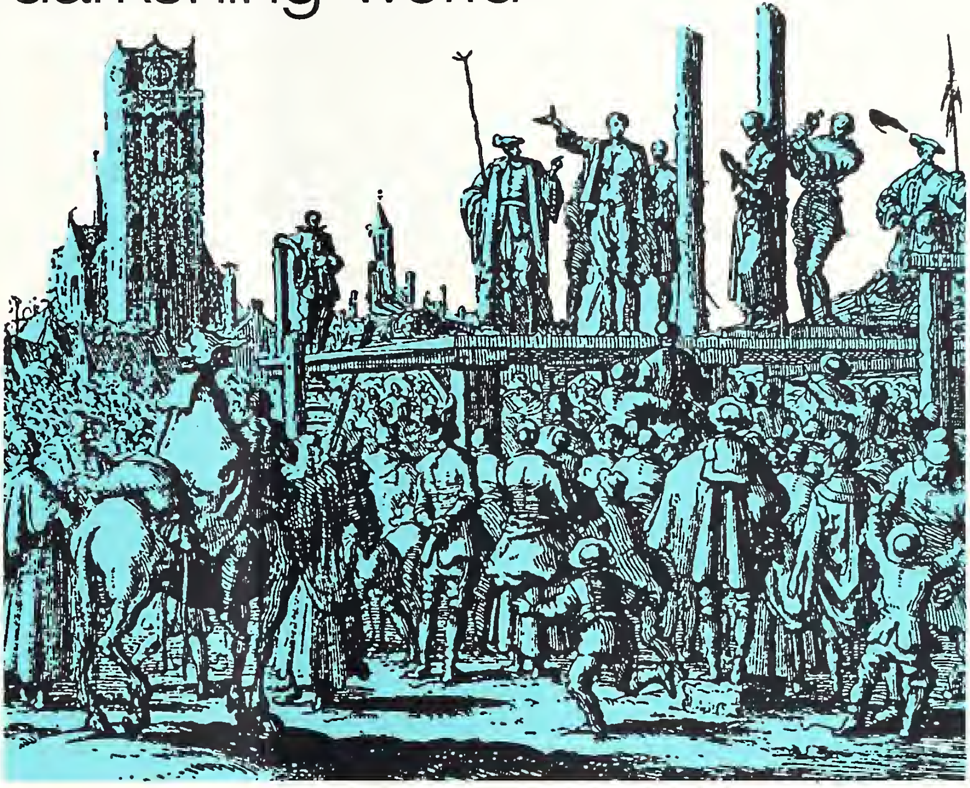
The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Walfried Goossen

Anabaptism:
a dying candle in a darkening world

(A loving indictment
and a
hope-filled challenge)

We teach with Christ and say, Believe the gospel. That gospel is the blessed announcement of the favor and grace of God to us and of forgiveness of sins through Christ Jesus. Faith accepts this gospel through the Holy Ghost and does not consider former righteousness or unrighteousness but hopes against hope (Romans 4:18) and with the whole heart casts itself upon the grace, Word and promises of the Lord, since it knows that God is true and that his promises cannot fail. In this the heart is renewed, converted, justified, becomes pious, peaceable and joyous, is born a child of God, approaches with full confidence the throne of grace and so becomes a joint heir of Christ and a possessor of eternal life.
—Menno Simons



Out of the funeral pyres of Anabaptist martyrs rose a people of faith, devotion and self-righteous character. Here Jan Wouterss van Kuyck and Adriaeken Jans are killed at Dortrecht, Holland, in 1572.

Tongues of fire. A small, brilliant light blazed in Europe in 1525 when the first Anabaptist martyr, Hypollytus Eberle, gave his life for Christ in Switzerland. His death announced to the world the advent of a radical faith recently born out of the Reformation—the faith of the New Testament church rekindled.

This faith, new to the time and locale, was necessitated by persecution rather than theology. It was not the product of an institution and its traditions but the reaction against one. Just so was the church of Peter and Paul—a church which sprang out of the old, legalistic Jewish order of their day amidst the flaming tongues of Pentecost and the unpredictable winds of the Holy Spirit.

Out of the funeral pyres of Anabaptist martyrs rose people of courageous faith and sincere devotion—and a narrow, self-righteous character—dedicated to their uniqueness, real and imagined. A result was a sense of superiority typical of those who set themselves apart and above the rest of humanity, yet cannot escape the natural flesh to which they, like the rest of humanity, are heir.

Test of fire. As is often the case, such people can become harsh and at times unreasonable and blind to the goodness in others and the evil in themselves. The conflict between light and darkness, good and evil, which then takes place within the hearts and community of a people who seek to love and yet judge their neighbors, each other and themselves, becomes a divisive factor that causes inner schisms. A misunderstanding of separation from worldliness and the nature of true piety results. At the same time a people of God is produced.

The early Anabaptists can be identified as a group of people who were extreme, even bizzare at times—a quality Mennonites today decry in others and admire in their tradition as radical discipleship. This discipleship of fearless testimony and challenge to the world around them bears little resemblance to today's Anabaptist life and witness.

Their discipleship was not one of goodness and performance but of deep devotion and dependence on God's love, not strength but grace in weakness. This would later change to a works-oriented faith, inner dissension and futile arguments over works versus faith, proving that each generation has to learn by its own mistakes because it doesn't learn from scriptural instructions on the matter.

Driven from the Dutch cities, Swiss cantons and German villages, the greatly despised "heretics" found refuge as farm laborers. Their testimony was transformed from an open confrontation with the church and secular authorities to a silent example as an admired people. They became good stewards of their resources and time, applying their survival impulses and faith to agrarian labor and the reclaiming of flooded land. They industriously enhanced the prosperity of the landowners who employed them.

Having retreated into quiet groups that met at various times and places to discuss their faith and future as a new yet unstructured social group, they quickly gained a reputation for humility, quietness, hard work and simplicity.

Slowly over several centuries Anabaptists became admired rather than hunted people as their societies took root in many locations such as Amsterdam, Danzig, Strasbourg, North America and elsewhere. Their congregations and conferences took form. Their creeds and belief systems were articulated to provide a deeper understanding of their religious impulses. A lifestyle was developed to reflect their faithfulness as they learned to walk in the Way. The Anabaptists soon found themselves dispersed around the globe until they were finely spread over the world like particles of salt sparsely sprinkled over an egg.

With them they took their doctrine of separation, which developed not from the need to survive but out of a conviction that a life of faith required a separate social organization from society at large. Attempting at once to love their neighbors and enemies and leave them as well, they developed a distrust of all but their own, even other believers, even while hoping to set an example for them. Thus they readily helped the needy "gentile" but shunned intermarriage and activities that threatened their isolation and imagined purity.

Test of affluence. Their greatest opportunity to create their version of the kingdom of God on earth and yet prosper materially came in Russia, beginning with the migration of 1790 from Prussia to the Ukraine. The invitation of Catherine the Great, who hoped Russia would benefit from the farming methods of this peace-loving people, encouraged resettlement.

By 1800, 400 families peopled 15 villages and enjoyed a special status granted them by the Czarina. Out of this a commonwealth of hundreds of villages occupying several millions of acres developed.

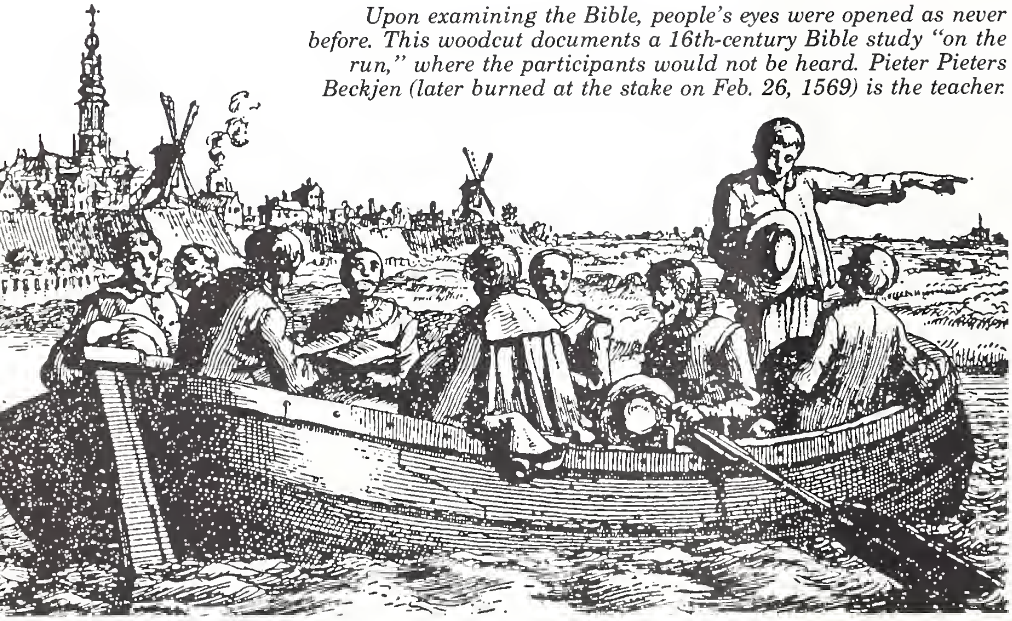
Sequestered on the steppes of Russia, it was not difficult for the Mennonites to maintain their faith and culture. But good stewardship and good works are a shaky foundation for a life of faith unless tempered by grace and humility.

Like it or not, their hard work and frugality resulted in worldly prosperity. Mennonite steppes "glowed

I tell you the truth in Christ; the rightly baptized disciples of Christ, note well, they who are baptized inwardly with Spirit and fire and externally with water, according to the Word of the Lord, have no weapons except patience, hope, silence and God's Word. The weapons of our warfare, says Paul, are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Our weapons are not weapons with which cities and countries may be destroyed, walls and gates broken down and human blood shed in torrents like water. But they are weapons with which the spiritual kingdom of the devil is destroyed and the wicked principle in man's soul is broken down, flinty hearts broken, hearts that have never been sprinkled with the heavenly dew of the Holy Word. We have and know no other weapons besides this, the Lord knows, even if we should be torn into a thousand pieces, and if as many false witnesses rose up against us as there are spears of grass in the fields and grains of sand upon the seashore.

Once more, Christ is our fortress, patience our weapon of defense, the Word of God our sword, and our victory a courageous, firm, unfeigned faith in Jesus Christ.—Menno Simons



Upon examining the Bible, people's eyes were opened as never before. This woodcut documents a 16th-century Bible study "on the run," where the participants would not be heard. Pieter Pieters Beckjen (later burned at the stake on Feb. 26, 1569) is the teacher.

Menno hated hypocrisy and the many excuses that people make for admiring Jesus but not following him. In many respects he had a deeper understanding of the grace and love of God than other Christian leaders of the time. "Although infants have neither faith nor baptism, think not that they are therefore damned. Oh no! They are saved, for they have the Lord's own promise of the kingdom of God." He is often extremely humble and contrite and very tender to those who are suffering. At the same time he is courageous, lashing out at rulers who try to dominate a church without understanding its spiritual nature. Roy Vogt

golden" in the harvest sun with unprecedented riches as underpaid Russian peasant employees watched simple Mennonite farmers evolve into powerful, wealthy landowners whose love for neighbors sometimes leaned toward the government and the status quo.

The influence of visiting evangelical preachers such as Edward Wust caused schisms in the community. Competition for greater spirituality and fidelity to biblical truth (which at times deteriorated to disagreements over the use of buttons on clothing and grasping of political influence by leaders) was examined in the glare of scriptural preaching and truths long forgotten or distorted by a legalistic tradition. Some Mennonites found the preaching of outsiders, who were at times closer in faith to the original Anabaptists than they were, threatening. Their faith was by now an institution facing the challenge of radical discipleship.

The dying flame. The early years of North American resettlement seemed to offer an opportunity to fulfill the dream of recreating the "golden years" of the Russian Mennonite commonwealth.

Exemption from military service, large tracts of land, settlements safely removed from large urban areas yet close enough to make life a little easier, a respected status as superior farmers—all were incentives that Mennonites needed to leave Mother Russia behind, however reluctantly, because Mother Russia was dead, murdered by the Bolshevik Revolution.

In Russia the old ways were no longer to be, and in North America they were to take on a new look entirely. This would affect the Mennonite way of working, learning, thinking, worshiping and relating to the outside world and themselves. America would give them a new image.

Until they reached North America and its unsettling zest for life and rapid technological change, Mennonites could remain aloof from the world around them if they chose. In the early part of this century they could even stay on the farm in spite of cars and tractors and trains.

But the influx of radio and television, movies and secular publications with their worldly—and fascinating—ideas, the lure of prosperity and education in the city, the flattery of the world, which admired the resourcefulness of the once quiet in the land, was too much. When bearded strays from Steinbach or Morden (Man.) shaved and stood at the head of a class on a secular campus, things changed.

Many Mennonites learned about their faith from intellectuals whose self-assurance alone seemed to throw a dark shadow over the scriptural truth cited by "ignorant backwoods preachers." Mennonites discovered that they too were intelligent. Some Mennonite intellectuals and leaders proudly pointed to the faith of their forebears. Others despised it by permitting, without challenge, heretical works to be offered in the name of faith.

The flame rekindled. Today we Mennonite Anabaptists have nowhere to hide, nowhere to go to be physically separated from the world. Like Adam and Eve we are destined to remain outside the garden and forced to make a go of life in the world and yet serve our God.

No amount of dialoguing or theologizing, no amount of sociology, psychology or organizational theory applied to Mennonite life will make possible the radical faith of the early church. Who would give up a life of freedom and wealth with the right to go to church anytime for a life of martyrdom, physical or otherwise? That requires a renewal and enablement by God's Spirit.

God offers a comforting faith. We have chosen a comfortable faith.

To argue whether religion must lead to suffering is in this instance to miss the point entirely. Open, uncompromised preaching and living of the faith will guarantee suffering and oppression—from within, not just from without the church.

The Spirit of God will bring renewal in small, local prayer groups willing to follow God's leading. There God will create community based on oneness in Spirit in the body of Christ—the true church. There the needless debate between individualism and fellowship, evangelism and discipleship will stop.

Closer fellowship with other Christians will result. In the hearts of men and women, young and old, and in groups that can accept the scorn of society, radical renewal—with its blessing and mistakes—takes place.

It takes place in gatherings of disciples, not in seminars for theoreticians who foist their unbelief on the church in the name of faith.

The original Anabaptist fellowships were not a movement. Genuine Anabaptists were and are, with all other believers, a flame that can never go out, a light that can never be ultimately dimmed because theirs is the light of God's Word, a light that will brighten increasingly with the glory of Jesus Christ until his return, never to die.

Wally Goossen is a member of Hamilton (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

In the hearts of men and women, radical renewal—with its blessings and mistakes—takes place. This is part of the congregation of San Francisco Chinese Mennonite Church.

Seeking what is necessary

A reconciliation in Ohio

Joanne Lehman

They came from Switzerland—hardworking, thrifty and fiercely independent. On our rolling hillsides they built a new community and established a place where they could worship God and support each other in the faith. They named their new home Sonnenberg in memory of the valley they had left behind.

But through the years disagreement divided the community as some of these independent, strong-willed people forged ahead and others held back, not wanting to shake the security they had established. Geographical conditions in Switzerland had fostered the independent spirit. The pioneers carried with them rejection and hurt that shaped a distinctive personality type that in time caused deep wounds within the community.

The descendants of these pioneers gathered 165 years later on a Sunday evening a year ago to celebrate communion and to affirm God's healing presence in their midst. James O. Lehman, a native of Sonnenberg and author of *Sonnenberg: a Haven and a Heritage* (a history of the community published on the 150-year anniversary, 1969), was present to share highlights of the past and the joy of the present.

The two Mennonite churches that left the mother Sonnenberg congregation have recently celebrated significant anniversaries—Salem's 100th in May and Kidron's 50th in mid-October. As members of the congregations prepared to celebrate these occasions, they wanted to affirm the reconciliation that has taken place through the years. They wanted to publicly lay aside differences of the past that have haunted them and to acknowledge the forgiveness that has taken place among the believers in the three Mennonite congregations in this small Wayne County, Ohio, community. Thus the communion service.

"As one who has spent a lot of time researching and writing the story of how God was at work in this community," said James Lehman, "I've looked at the . . . joys and the sorrows, including the divisions that have deeply affected many people sitting here tonight. So I see tonight as an event that lightens up the corners and drives the shadows deeper. . . . The grace of God and the willingness of many people has brought us to this place, where three churches can have an event of reconciliation such as this. And how fitting it is that a service such as this is done around the communion table."

Looking back. The Salem Mennonite Church was founded in May 1886 when 18 members left the Sonnenberg congregation. The issues that divided the group sound strange to us. Church leaders were upset about such activities as prayer meetings, education and increasing interest in missions societies. Things came to a head when it was time for spring communion.

"Bishop Christian Sommer reluctantly shouldered the responsibility of facing the problem squarely," writes James Lehman. "In 12 points that were recorded and preserved, he sadly but firmly outlined the 'heresies' propagated by Salem and stated that some of his members had heart and soul with the new church and only came to the old church for sake of appearance."

The other ordained men at Sonnenberg joined Sommer and finally forbade members to attend any more services at Salem except for funeral services. As a result, 13 more transferred their membership to Salem. Within a year the new congregation had more than 50 members, a church building and its own pastor. Early in the Salem history it joined the General Conference Mennonite Church, with which it is still affiliated.

In his book Lehman sums up the events of 1886 this way: "As in most church schisms the animosities, the hard feelings, the spiritual pride in one's own group, the harsh words reverberated for many years to come. Both sides suffered. The conservative group needed the new ideas, the fresh approach to keep from becoming spiritually ingrown and stale; the liberal group needed the fellowship and restraint of the other group in order to keep good balance and to keep from thinking that everything old and traditional was to be discarded."

A little more than 50 years later an even more cataclysmic division occurred when the Kidron Mennonite congregation was formed. Again the reasons were complex and entangled with the strong personalities of church leaders who practiced an authoritarian type of church government. The issues were not doctrinal but instead focused on differences of opinion in exactly how to live out the faith. One of the issues was education—a carry-over reaction from the previous disagreement 50 years earlier. Because of the disagreement at that time, education was slow in being accepted, even though changing times made it necessary to finally face this issue.

The conservative element of congregational leadership began spelling out specific guidelines on how to apply

(From left): Bill Detweiler, pastor at Kidron Church; S. David Garber, pastor at Sonnenberg; Larry Wilson, pastor at Salem Church.

biblical principles to daily living. These articles called for members to refrain from wearing jewelry, to wear plain clothing and to abstain from a long list of worldly amusements and pleasures. Young people's organizations had been formed, including a men's and ladies' chorus and a literary society. These were frowned upon and finally forbidden by the bishop.

The question of conference affiliation was also a significant issue. The Sonnenberg leadership strongly resisted conference affiliation, which could have helped give the church guidance and direction. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to resolve differences with the help of bishops from outside the community, but finally, on Oct. 13, 1936, 330 members left the Sonnenberg congregation and formed a new congregation, which was named Kidron Mennonite Church.

Lehman's writing shows the complexity of events and the massive difficulties created by personality conflicts. "Many, having once declared themselves in a certain way, felt they could not back down but that they needed to pursue their course to the end, even if it meant more problems. Somehow it was felt that to confess wrongs and to retract unwise or harsh statements was a sign of weakness rather than strength," writes Lehman.

Signs of healing. Like wounds to the physical body, when the body of Christ is wounded, scars remain. But slowly through the years healing has taken place. Today there is much similarity in faith and practice of the three congregations. Each church has a library and holds prayer meetings. (Now we bemoan our poor attendance.) We still have diverse opinions in each congregation about how education of the youth should be carried out. Looking over the assembled group at the recent communion service, it was impossible to tell from people's clothing who belonged to which congregation. In recent times the three groups have often gathered for community worship and for choir presentations.

What has the Kidron-Sonnenberg community learned from its experience that could be helpful to other Mennonites who are faced with differences within the congregation? Can we learn anything from our past that will strengthen our ability to deal with conflict among ourselves in health ways?

Our story has revealed how futile it is to try to press everyone into one mold and to legislate unity as defined by our practice of the faith. The way we express our faith is continually changing as we move from generation to generation. As individuals and as a community we need to be constantly exploring and discovering how to put faith into action with the passing years and changing scene.

Today it would be unthinkable for a pastor at Kidron, Sonnenberg or Salem to forbid attendance at a prayer meeting, yet we have our own conflicts about whether women should serve as elders or about the use and expansion of our facilities. We have church libraries, but we aren't sure it's right or necessary for our congregations to own a computer or a videocassette recorder. As in the past, there are always those who are more progressive and are pushing for involvement in new endeavors, while others are more conservative and want to hold on to things from the past.

Ron Kraybill of Mennonite Conciliation Service says, "To be part of a church means, by definition, to participate in diversity. If you want to have less conflict, try to have more. Encourage and invite disagreement. This removes the threat and opens up discussion.

Looking ahead. We need to be willing to listen to each other without making judgments. We must learn to express our various views about how to live our faith without feeling threatened if others disagree with us. We need people who are willing to make themselves vulnerable and risk exposing their innermost feelings, both positive and negative.

As we become more sensitive to each other there will be less need for explosive confrontations because people will feel like they are being heard and that their opinions matter.

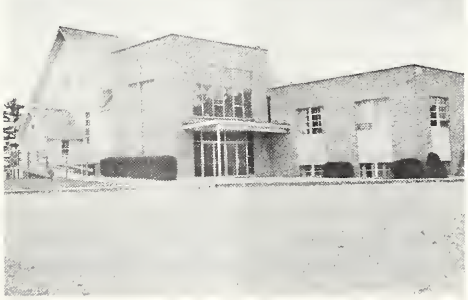
Leaders have an important role, and there can be devastating results when they do not have an open attitude toward church members. Leaders often discouraged differences and feared conflict, seeing it as a potential threat to their power. In the June '85 *Conciliation Quarterly* Kraybill writes, "As a leader I will stop implying that disagreement with my views or policies means a challenge to my leadership; instead I will *encourage* others to bring their concerns and disagreements so we can talk before frustrations have reached a peak." We need more leaders who aren't afraid to walk to the chalkboard, and say, "Why don't we disagree here for a few minutes and see the range of viewpoints we have represented in this room?" and make a list.

Just as there are inevitable conflicts in family life, there are also times when congregational ties are strained. Still, our basic commitment to Christ,who is our foundation, gives us courage to weather the storms of our life together.

In the Kidron-Sonnenberg community we still have much to learn about dealing with conflict within our congregations. As we have looked at the light and the shadow we are reminded of the great cloud of witnesses that surround us. We have celebrated anniversaries thankful that God has helped us learn from our past and has shown us how to put some of it to rest.

Joanne Lehman, Box 44, Kidron, OH 44636, a member of Kidron Mennonite Church, is a homemaker and writer. She writes a column called "Preventips" in Christian Living.

Sonnenberg Church



Salem Mennonite Church

Kidron Mennonite Church

A view from the Mennonite diaspora

Anonymous by request

Diaspora, meaning dispersion, designates in the Christian tradition those Jewish Christians of the apostolic age living among the heathen. The term might well take on a meaning for us if by it we designated those Mennonites who grew up in Mennonite communities and who, for various reasons, no longer live in Mennonite communities and no longer attend Mennonite churches.

For the latter fact, we dispersed Mennonites sometimes feel guilt and even receive blame. Some years ago in *The Mennonite* a guest editorialist pleaded the plight of Mennonite schools that found themselves unable to attract qualified Mennonites. One of the reasons cited was the unwillingness of well-educated Mennonites to give up the salaries they could command in non-Mennonite institutions.

That view of the Mennonites of the diaspora by those who have stayed home exhibits both the inability to understand us and the blame we are sometimes made to feel. Without denying the validity of that blame, some of us certainly would think long and hard about coming home. Here are views which some dispersed Mennonites hold toward our status in the diaspora and toward those who have stayed in the home communities.

Blame. If asked why we no longer live in a Mennonite community, we would tell a variety of stories. Some of us left our home communities on purpose, being drawn by the lure of freedom, by the attraction of higher salaries than we could earn at home or by intellectual pursuits, having no prospects of employment in our home communities. Others of us, as we near middle age, become acutely aware that our lifelong supposition that we will someday be able to go home is not going to come true, at least not until we retire. Although highly qualified to fill positions in Mennonite institutions and communities, we have been passed over or have never received a call. Still others of us chose to go into fields in which the only job openings preclude the return that had always been our unspoken supposition. Whatever the reasons, we now find ourselves on the outside looking in. The feelings generated from that position vary from the highly positive to the negative. If we have anything to share with those we have left behind it may lie in an expression of those feelings.

Pride. Pride, the warm kind of feeling that surely would not fall under the biblical injunction against it as a sin, often characterizes our reactions to what we hear Mennonites are doing. The *Mennonite Hymnal* provides rich avenues for congregational and choir participation in worship services. Some of us have been so impressed by its richness that we have imported it into our non-Mennonite churches.

The faithfulness to the Anabaptist tradition that led you to identify your uniqueness and to express it in the Foundation Series is providing not only your children with a solid foundation in that heritage but also some of ours, for we have worked for its adoption in the churches we have joined.

We often point to publications with the assurance that they reflect the best in the Mennonite tradition and have a pertinent message to all searching Christians. We buy those books for our libraries and nurture our children with them; we offer them as gifts to newlyweds, to graduates, to new parents here in the diaspora.

The Mennonite continues to offer the blend of news and spiritual sustenance which, while feeding our souls as well as our hunger for news from home, stimulates us to examine our lives regularly in the light of the tradition that nurtured us. Mennonite colleges seem to maintain a grasp on the concept that they owe their constituency something. Being small, they offer value-centered educational opportunities that cause us to program our children from early childhood to think that they may one day be attending Bethel or Bluffton or Conrad Grebel or Canadian Mennonite Bible College. We covet for our children such educational opportunities. Your faithfulness in responding to human need through Mennonite Disaster Service and Mennonite Central Committee, receiving frequent recognition in the general media, assures us that the message of the Mennonite tradition lives in deed as well as in word.

Shame. The very subjects of which we are proud come under attack at times from within the Mennonite communities. We react with shame and despair. What happened to the vision of a congregation that led it to disaffiliate with the General Conference Mennonite Church? Can it be true, we wonder, that some congregations have refused to use the Foundation Series? We learn of churches which formerly sent many students to our colleges and which are now sending their young people elsewhere. Why, we wonder, when we look at those going to serve with MCC, are U.S. Mennonites seemingly producing proportionately fewer volunteers than Canadians? Why do some refuse to participate in MCC and MDS? News that whole congregations dispense with subscriptions to *The Mennonite* dumbfounds us.

These situations, it seems increasingly clear to us, may all stem from one shaming fact about which we so desperately do not want to hear: The Anabaptist vision is fading in some of our home communities. We do not pretend that the vision is perfectly focused out here either, for some of us have forgotten about peacemaking and have joined the armed forces. Others of us have performed the spiritual gymnastics necessary to allow ourselves to accept well-paying positions in defense-related industries.

Loneliness. We feel left out. We're not on the trail to receive many Mennonite visitors or programs. We really wanted to see the Mennonite film "And When They Shall Ask," but it never made it to our town, and time just did not allow us to motor to the nearest Mennonite community, where it was being shown. We seldom get to hear the excellent choirs from Mennonite colleges. Although our not being in Mennonite communities can in many cases be ascribed to our deliberate decisions, we nevertheless feel left out.

Now as we give money to the General Conference, and some of us do, then we receive the quarterly letters appealing for funds. But when it comes to conscious attempts to nurture us or to use the skills we have developed, skills we have offered at various times, preference invariably goes to those already located in the home communities.

Actually the Mennonite schools keep more in touch with us than do the churches that once nurtured us. The schools not only appeal for money but continue to inform us about developments they undertake. They sometimes even send us visitors.

Choices. As we moved into the non-Mennonite world, many of us chose new churches. For some this involved compromises. Some sought churches that emphasize a certain kind of preaching. Others chose churches that linked their preaching to specific kinds of outreach to the needy at home and abroad. Some joined another peace church, such as the Church of the Brethren, and often felt they did not make any compromise with their cherished Anabaptist ideals in selecting a new congregation through which to lead Christian lives.

We create opportunities for our children to come into contact with Mennonite young people—such as church camps. We deal with our children's amazement in finding out that they are more in tune with some basic Mennonite principles—such as the peace position—than some of their contemporaries growing up in Mennonite communities.

Some, it is true, have taken the opportunity of being away from home to drop church membership entirely. Others have devised a form of deception, perpetuated upon themselves as well as upon those at home: Retain membership in the home congregation and make superficial ties with a local congregation but carefully avoid meaningful involvement. They become Christians who do not enter into the service of the world through any congregation.

Many of us who have chosen new church homes have taken the opportunity to sort out what we value in the Mennonite tradition and seek to preserve it through our choices. Yet we sometimes recognize a nagging feeling that we may be trying to perpetuate an impossible dream. While we may experience some measure of success in instilling in our children what we value from our Mennonite heritage, we wonder how much success they will have when they marry and have children. They will have no Mennonite community to which to refer, only father and mother.

On the other hand, as we create opportunities for our children to come into contact with Mennonite young people, such as at church camps, we must deal with our children's amazement in finding out that they are more in tune with some basic Mennonite principles—such as the peace position—than some of their contemporaries growing up in Mennonite communities.

We experience mixed reactions when we hear about the new efforts you are making to plant churches in the large cities of the continent. We know that the Anabaptist movement made its first great strides in the cities of Europe. Only later did it become rural and isolated. We wonder if you will be coming to our city to establish a church. Some of us will rejoice, for the churches we have joined satisfy only partially the gospel standards as we understand them. Others of us will be embarrassed, for you will perhaps find out how deceptive we have been in allowing you to think that we were leading an active church life here in the city. Still others of us will have a conflict to resolve when you come to our city. While we recognize the need in the world for the Mennonite witness, we believe that we have in the meantime found a congregation that preaches and acts out the Word of God in the way that you taught us was proper. Nevertheless, we encourage you to come.

Giving. We grew up Mennonite, we went to Mennonite colleges, we gave some years of our lives to service through MCC. Although circumstances have led us to join churches of other denominations, our roots remain Mennonite. Many of us give money to a church college, to the General Conference, to Mennonite Biblical Seminary and to MCC. We value these institutions and hope those of you at home recognize those values as well. Having grown up in a tradition where many people had a sense of giving money to important causes, we are often shocked here in the diaspora to learn that in the average American church one-third of the congregation supplies 75 percent of the budget. We harbor, perhaps naively, the belief that Mennonite churches have fewer non-contributing members than we have encountered out here.

Belonging. You people at home have important ways of making us know that we still belong, even though years and many miles separate us. You follow us in our moves, in our professions and in our family life. You welcome us when we return home. You make us feel that we belong.

Recently a friend and I ordered merchandise through a merchant in a Mennonite community in which I had once lived. The clerk who waited on us had never met me, but when she brought out our purchases, she said, "Here's your order, Mrs. Jones, and here is yours, Jim." I belonged, even to people who did not know me.

Except for those who sought escape in joining the Mennonite diaspora, most of us out here still want to belong. We thank you for the many ways you help us feel part of you. As you think of those in your families who have joined us out here, you might consider gifts that will help them maintain contact with the best that the Mennonite churches have to offer today. Sending them *The Mennonite* can provide spiritual sustenance and news from the home communities. Mennonite publishers now have valuable books for all of us, young and old. Such books as gifts will allow you to help us maintain the faith and allow you to fulfill a gift-giving obligation. Many of us, as statistics will prove, are sending our children to Mennonite colleges. Are you? Are you supporting those schools? We hope the schools will still be there when our children reach college age. Have you encouraged your family members out here in the diaspora to attend a Mennonite church camp or college? Are you supporting the outreach of the conference and MCC? Have you given of your time to their endeavors?

Some of us are trying to remain faithful to the Mennonite tradition as we received it. You, of course, can maintain the tradition without us. You can also abandon it, leaving us in the diaspora with only the memory instead of the vibrant, caring tradition in which we have seen so much evidence of Christians carrying on the struggle to become the new creatures called for by the New Testament message. If you include us, we will certainly be more successful in our efforts at faithfulness. And you may discover ways we could enrich you.

United Methodist Laurence Hull Stookey of that denomination's hymnal revision committee writes in *Circuit Rider* about the many changes that hymns have undergone. "Faith of Our Fathers" originally read, "Faith of our Fathers, Mary's prayers/ shall win our country back to thee;/ And through the faith that comes from God/ England shall then indeed be free." Hymnal purists would not want change, but would they want the original? Stookey points out that "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" had 18 stanzas, the last of which had racist overtones. And alternations of language occur as words turn obsolete. "Hark how all the welkin rings" became "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." One line of "Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown" says, "To me, to all, thy mercies move." Wesley originally wrote (a la King James Version), "To me, to all, thy bowels move." Stookey asks, "Do people really know what they ask when they demand that the hymnal revision committee 'print the hymns exactly as they were written'?" He observes that if the committee translates "Of the Father's love begotten" to "Of the Parent's heart begotten," they'd get clobbered. Yet the fourth-century original by Prudentius is "ex parentis corde" ("of the parent's heart").

NEWS

120 people represent 18 nations

Latin American Mennonites meet in Guatemala

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—Mennonite representatives from 18 countries, mainly from Latin America, attended a special consultation in Antigua, Guatemala, Sept. 7-10, on the theme "The Mission of the Mennonite Church in Latin America." Glendon Klaassen, secretary for Latin America for the Commission on Overseas Mission, represented the General Conference.

Objectives for the consultation included affirmation of the church in its mission to the world in the following ways: (1) clarifying the theological bases and the strategy of witness; (2) challenging ourselves to faithfulness through the kingdom of God; (3) experiencing the renewal power of the gospel of the kingdom within the community of disciples; (4) expressing an eschatology that clarifies the mission of the church now and in the future.

Daily Bible studies, six position papers, and small group discussions gave structure to the activities of the participants, approximately 65 people. "The consultation provided a time for learning from the histories and the experiences of the various representatives of Latin America and for coming to new understandings on how to live and serve Christ in the context of each," commented Klaassen.

"It was clearly recognized that the brothers and sisters from Latin America are the primary missionaries in their countries as well as cross-culturally within Latin America. Those of us representing North American mission boards were challenged to help facilitate this. I learned much about relationships and was impressed with the dynamic leadership of the Latin American Mennonites," he said.

The conference was primarily financed by Mennonite World Conference and Mennonite Central Committee, with participation of the mission boards active in Latin America. COM has workers in seven Latin American countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Nicaraguan participants meet in a discussion group during the Latin America Mission Consultation.

New magazine begins

San Pedro Sula, Honduras (MWC)—A new magazine of "Anabaptist reflection in Central America" has just released its first issue. *Esperanza en Camino (Walking in Hope)* is a joint project of the Honduran Mennonite Church and Mennonite Central Committee. It will appear four times yearly, in Spanish.

A "hurricane wind" is invading and convulsing the Latin American region, writes editor Juan Angel Ochoa in his opening editorial, but "we must not forget that the wind of the Holy Spirit also blows in the opposite direction, clarifying and strengthening the changes taking place in the midst of the current situation of repression and injustice."

Esperanza en Camino is designed to promote discussion in small Christian "reflection groups." Its large text should make it readable for people at various educational levels while serving as a future resource for theological education programs.

"The region's conflicts," says Gerald

Four hundred Chicago-area residents, including some Mennonites, have brought a suit against officials of the U.S. government "to enjoin them from continuing their illegal war of aggression against the people of Nicaragua." The specified 60 days for giving an answer ended Sept. 2. Mennonite Voluntary Service workers Richard Boyd and Dorothy Friesen joined nine others in remaining standing July 21 in U.S. District Court after Judge Harry Leinenweber refused to hear a plea for emergency relief from U.S. government activities in Nicaragua. Nine of the group were found in criminal contempt and fined $50.

Koinonia Fellowship of Chandler, Ariz., celebrated its 10th anniversary Sept. 12-14. Koinonia began as a joint church planting effort between the Southwest Conference of the Mennonite Church and the Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church. The desire was to plant a church on the east side of the Phoenix metropolitan area with an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective. The membership is 62, with an average attendance of 85.

"Even though the classical differences between Catholics and Protestants have been resolved," says Hans Küng, Catholic theologian, "leaders of both faith groups are dragging their feet in moving toward the goal of visible unity. . . . Some church leaders would rather have nobody in church than have an ecumenical service."

Schlabach of MCC, "along with interaction with Christians of other traditions, are challenging them to rediscover their biblical and Anabaptist roots as a peace church. But in Central America being a peace church means being a church struggling for justice. Our brothers and sisters are seeking to recreate their own Anabaptism. We hope *Esperanza en Camino* will provide a forum for sharing their reflections with one another as well as with Christians of other traditions."

The first issue contains the speeches and final declaration of a consultation in 1984 of more than 80 Central American church leaders from Anabaptist-Mennonite background. One article asserts, "The moment for Central American Anabaptists has come."

Yearly subscriptions to *Esperanza en Camino* are available for $12 (U.S.) in Canada and the United States. Write to *Esperanza en Camino*, Apartado 340, San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

Hong Kong Mennonite Church installs first Chinese minister

Hong Kong (GCMC)—On July 6, Paul Wing-Sang Wong was licensed and installed as the full-time minister of the Lok Fu Mennonite Church here. He is a graduate of the Chung Chi Theological Division of the Chinese University of Hong Kong and is the first Hong Kong Chinese to be licensed as a Mennonite minister.

Hugh D. Sprunger, missionary for the General Conference, conducted the licensing and installation service. Also present at the service were members of the Mennonite Ministries in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Mennonite Church and the Lok Fu Mennonite Church.

Wong's family came to Hong Kong from China during the war between the Nationalists and communists. "The situation in Hong Kong at that time was very bad, and the Mennonites came and gave us a hand," he said. Later he came to know Ira and Evie Kurtz through participation in their English and Bible study classes. When the Kurtzes founded the Lok Fu Mennonite Church in 1976, Wong became a member.

"The calling to serve God and an interest in seminary training came upon me clearly and finally in my graduation from secondary school," he said.

Wong faces the challenges of ministering to a 40-member congregation and finding a new site for the Lok Fu Church by 1989 because of the Hong Kong government's decision to raze and redevelop the present site.

"I am looking forward to serving the Lord wholeheartedly," said Wong.

In the photo at right, Ira A. Kurtz, Jr., and Hugh Sprunger (right) join two representatives of Lok Fu Mennonite Church in commissioning Paul Wing-Sang Wong.

Lok Fu Mennonite Church members and friends on the occasion of Paul Wing-Sang Wong's licensing as pastor for the congregation in Hong Kong.

Stating that government-operated lotteries are addictive, foster fantasy values, make unrealistic promises and are morally and economically destructive, Brethren in Christ delegates at July sessions in Ontario adopted a resolution urging that members "refrain from support of government-operated lotteries" and "use their influence to alert others to the dangers as well as the evils of lotteries."

The seventh biennial Church Music Seminar will be held Jan. 23-25, 1987, on the campuses of Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Mennonite Brethren Bible College, both in Winnipeg. Three internationally known musicians will conduct and lecture in their area of expertise: Helen Kemp (children's choir), Michael Kemp (youth choir) and Weston Noble (adult choir). In addition workshops in conducting, organ literature, choral voice training, choral arranging and composition will be led by MBBC and CMBC faculty.

The Suan Phlu Detention Center in Bangkok, Thailand, holds some 600 men, women and children who have been arrested for immigration violations and have not been able to pay their fines. Conditions are harsh and space limited. Each person has about 1.5 square meters of space. The Suan Phlu Jail Coordinating Committee, of which Mennonite Central Committee is a member, helps detainees get out of jail once they have served their time. The jail committee then intercedes on their behalf with government officials, foreign embassies and voluntary agencies to assist in their release.

Burkholder will direct, and Loewen assist, young adult ministry

Burkholder

Loewen

Joint services to Mennonite students and young adults through the Commission on Education and Student and Young Adult Services of Mennonite Board of Missions (Mennonite Church) are being provided by SYAS for an interim period of time until May 1987.

SYAS director Myrna Burkholder emphasized that the agreement does not constitute a merger, since both agencies will continue to provide some services separately. Eleanor Loewen, Winnipeg, is providing program development consultant services for COE in the area of joint services.

Burkholder says the ministry expansion "makes sense since we are already doing things that relate to churchwide young adult ministry. But we are not gearing up in a big way since we haven't added additional staff or funding. Currently, however, we are serving as a resource and consultant, with the emphasis on young adult ministry at the congregational level."

Mark Stucky, Elkhart, Ind., former co-pastor at Calvary Mennonite Church, Liberal, Kan. (1984-85), is the new editor of *Feedback*. Mark has served as contact person for young adults of both denominations and is a graduate of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. *Feedback*, a quarterly publication, will begin a revised format in November and will be distributed to conference pastors with *Leadership*.

As a result of the churchwide young adult ministry mandate, Student and Young Adult sponsored a Churchwide Young Adult Ministry Consultation in June with the help of a grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid. *Phil Richard for Mennonite Board of Missions*

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Mennonite Central Committee worker Beth Weisbrod is working in Botswana with several church leaders to translate 35 Bible stories into Thimbukushu, the local language. She writes that the stories about Noah, the Exodus and Job speak to villagers in "deep, life-changing ways. Sometimes a passage remains hidden and foreign to me, but to them it is obvious and clear. . . . The way they relate to the Adam and Eve story or the links they make between Job and Jesus teach me to see the Bible in a new light. The Word becomes alive and empowering for them and for me."

American Bible Society staff members planning their major new program of Scripture outreach to young people, "Act Now—Go with the Word," recall that the Bible Society movement began with a teenager 200 years ago. It was then that a young girl, Mary Jones, walked barefoot over the hills of her native Wales to fulfill a dream—to own her own Bible. Mary's trek implanted the germ of an idea that eventually led to the global Bible Society movement.

Kansas Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers in three locations sent 99 train carloads of hay to drought-stricken farmers in the southeastern United States in late summer, reports Lowell Detweiler, executive coordinator of MDS.

Elim school charts new territory

Altona, Man.—"This may be a significant moment in the history of our churches. I'm confident that if we can go through this barrier and discover a new format for Christian education, one that is adapted to adults who live in the land, we can carry on. This is the way God works."

With these words David Schroeder, professor of New Testament at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, challenged faculty, alumni and other interested people at the opening program of Elim Bible Institute, held Sept. 28 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Keeping in mind that Elim, due to lack of a sufficient number of students, decided not to offer a full residential program this fall, Schroeder urged the faculty and Elim constituency to seize the opportunity to explore new ways to teach the Bible. "We need to become more literate about the Bible," he stated. "We have lots of understanding of the world but are not sure how that relates to Scripture."

Schroeder also called for new ways of doing adult Christian education. "We've emphasized children and youth, and that is good. But we also have come to see higher education as relevant for specialists rather than for all adults. We need to find a way to be constantly learning and studying, since in applying faith to daily life there is no plateau." He affirmed repeatedly the opportunity that Elim now has for devising new ways of addressing the needs of adults in the church.

Contributing to the worship setting of the opening program was a 25-voice choir made up of Elim alumni, directed by Elim instructor Ken Wiebe Warkentin and assembled especially for the occasion. The service was led by Victor Kliewer, Elim principal, and featured remarks by Eleanor Loewen, who chairs the Elim board; Philip Bender, Elim instructor; and Walter Franz, pastor at the Bergthaler Church.

The Elim program this fall is taking the form of adult education courses given at the school and extension courses available to churches of the wider constituency. In addition, seminars by Elim faculty on special topics are available for youth group meetings and retreats. Planning for the 1986-87 school year still includes residential components.

A three-week January program at the Altona campus is being planned, as is a January mission emphasis week. Consideration is also being given to a short-term residential program in the spring.

The opening program followed a morning alumni worship service. Approximately 70 Elim alumni attended the service, which featured Victor Kliewer as speaker. Following the service, the alumni held their annual business meeting. A highlight of the meeting was the presentation of the first "Alumnus of the Year" award to Ben Pauls, Elim instructor from 1975-80. The Pauls family is residing in Altona this fall, on leave from a teaching assignment in Paraguay with the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Philip Bender

J. K. Klassen, third from right, was a member of the Music/Ministry Tour Group visiting the Soviet Union Aug. 14-Sept. 1. Organized by Mennonite Central Committee, the group of church leaders and musicians learned about church life and music there. Klassen is a retired pastor of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man., vice chair of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba and a former member of the Commission on Overseas Mission. Others in the group were (left to right) William and Irmgard Baerg, both music instructors at Mennonite Brethren Bible College; Henrietta Schellenberg, soprano soloist; Rudy Schellenberg, professor of music at Steinbach Bible College; Jacob K. Klassen, retired; Irene and Abram Neufeld, pastoral couple at the Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg.

Mennonite Central Committee received an award for its distinguished contribution in Bangladesh to "World Peace, Social and Humanitarian Services" on July 7. Speakers at the ceremonies said that though Bangladesh is hardly a world power, it can support the United Nations' call for the end of the testing of nuclear weapons by the superpowers. They also talked of the deep yearning for peace by the masses of poor in Bangladesh.

Don Yoder, secretary for church planting and evangelism for the General Conference Mennonite Church, will teach "Outreach and Church Growth" at Hesston (Kan.) College in January 1987. One, two or three credit hours are available for the course, which will "review different ways that Christians understand evangelism, help participants develop personal models by which to share their faith, and explore ways that these skills can be used in local congregations."

Jake Harms of Winnipeg, began work Sept. 1 as Commission on Overseas Mission Canadian coordinator for the General Conference. His desk is in the offices of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada in Winnipeg. The position was created in September 1984 to give closer attention to Canadian concerns. Harms was named to the position in March 1985 and comes to the job after 15 years as pastor at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. He will interpret and promote overseas missions concerns in Canada as well as counsel with and schedule the itineration of missionaries in Canada.

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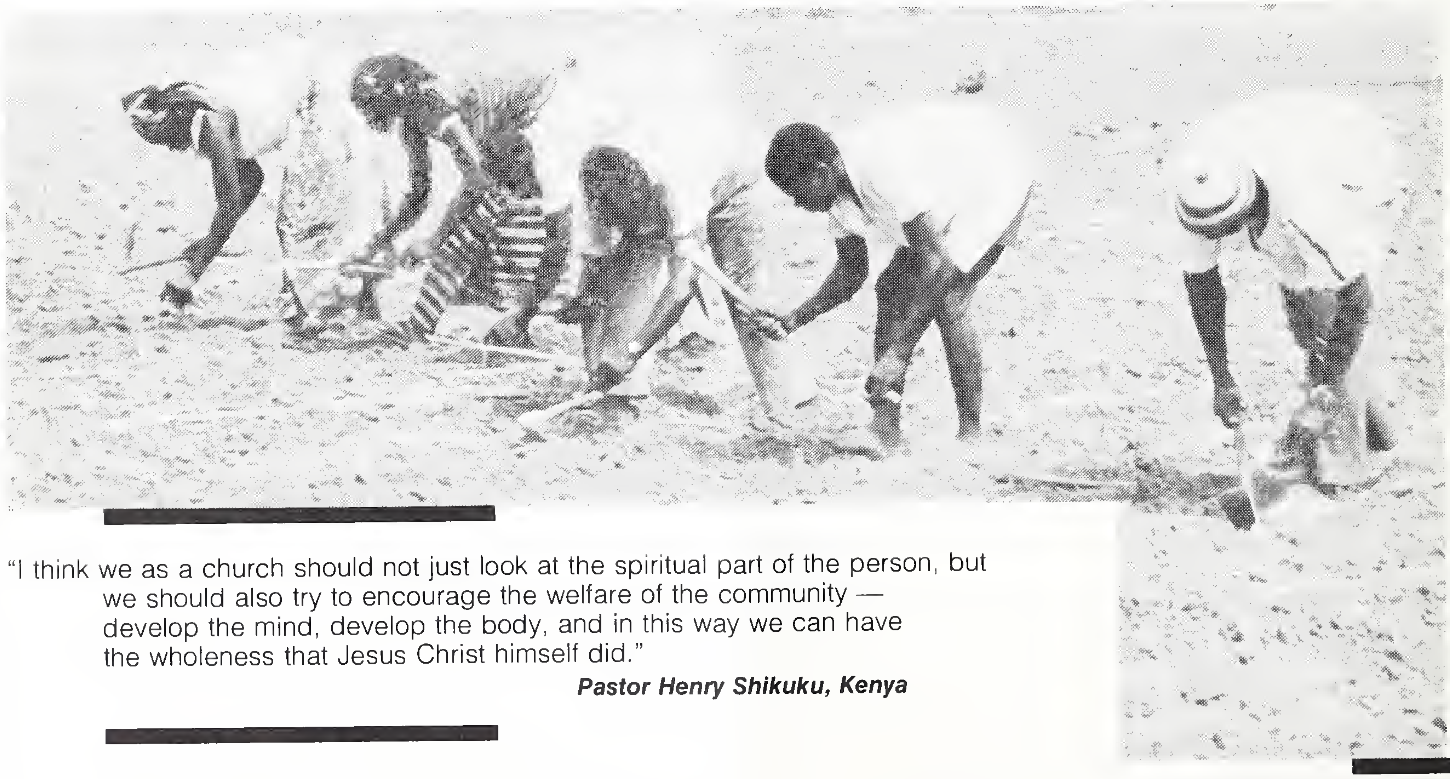

"I think we as a church should not just look at the spiritual part of the person, but we should also try to encourage the welfare of the community — develop the mind, develop the body, and in this way we can have the wholeness that Jesus Christ himself did."

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"The most important thing for us is to see local churches working together, learning to cooperate on projects and being able to trust each other," says Jan Shetler, Mennonite Central Committee worker in Tanzania. There are about 150 Mennonite churches in the South Mara Diocese in northwest Tanzania, the result of 52 years of mission work. Jan and her husband, Peter, are encouraging the development of "a network of skills within the diocese." The Shetlers say that in the church program villagers are responsible to pay for and manage their own development activities.

Ivan Illich was a featured speaker and Will D. Campbell a featured participant at the kickoff for the national sanctity of life consultation at Bluffton (Ohio) College Sept. 19-20. The goal of the consultation was to bring together opponents of war, abortion and the death penalty to find common ground so that they can all work to promote the sanctity of human life, according to Kay Hardesty, coordinator of the consultation and associate professor of sociology at Bluffton College.

A Chinese university professor predicts that China will be sending Christian missionaries to Europe and the United States by the end of the century. C. K. Chang, 77, currently visiting professor at Baylor University in Texas from An Hui Normal University in China, says that rapidly advancing evangelization indicates Chinese by the year 2000 will "be sending missionaries not only to our own people but all around the world."

RECORD

workers

Hershberger

Lapp

Martins

Janice L. Hershberger has been named *Handbook* editor for the General Conference. She began Oct. 1. She received a bachelor's degree in animal science and a master's degree in journalism from Kansas State University in Manhattan.

Lubin and *Tillie Jantzen*, on leave from First Church, Newton, Kan., will do a three-month feasibility study on new urban church ministries in India during December and January and February 1987. They are under the sponsorship of the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Roelf and *Juliette Kuitse*, Elkhart, Ind., were appointed to a three-month term that began Sept. 19 at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune, India. Roelf is teaching at the seminary, while Juliette is working in the seminary library. Their assignment is a joint appointment of COM and the Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

James M. Lapp, moderator of Mennonite Church General Assembly and chairman of Mennonite Church General Board, will become the new executive secretary of Mennonite Church General Board on Sept. 1, 1987.

Carl and *Sandra Cook Liechty*, GC missionaries to Japan, are now living in Lima, Ohio, where Carl is teaching in the public school system. They worked in Japan from 1963-64, 1969-74 and 1978-86.

Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind., announces the following changes: *John Liechty* became assistant vice president of marketing on Sept. 1, overseeing the day-to-day operations of the division; *Janet Porzelius* joined MMA as wellness educator Sept. 10, working primarily with the wellness program for children; *Kent Stucky* will leave MMA at the end of October after eight years of service. He and his family will begin a five-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in the Middle East; *Don Wohlgemuth* of Enid, Okla., was named Western regional manager Aug. 11.

The spiritual emphasis committee for the development plan of the General Conference, appointed in September, is made up of the following: *Ivorie Lowe*, Chicago; *Edwin Epp*, Leamington, Ont.; *Duane Ruth-Heffelbower*, Elkhart, Ind.; *Marcia Yoder-Schrock*, Elkhart, Ind.; *Ray Frey*, Newton, Kan.

Rick and *Kathleen (King) Martin*, Bethel Church, Elora, Ont., and First Church, Nappanee, Ind., respectively, have begun three-year MCC terms in Les Cayes, Haiti. She is working as a music teacher and he is working in the music department at a local school. They received bachelor's degrees from Goshen (Ind.) College, Rick in psychology and natural science and Kathleen in music. His parents are Carol and Ernie Martin of Elora. Hers are Darrell and Mary Ann King of Mentone.

Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man., announced the following personnel changes: *Rudy Friesen*, former business administrator, has left for work in Taiwan. He is replaced by *Wes Sawatzky*. New physical education directors are *Nancy Graber* from Freeman, S.D., and *David Petkau* from St. Catharines, Ont. *Robert Wiebe* of Winnipeg is the new music director, replacing *Rudy Krahn*. *Henry Dick*, mathematics and physics professor, is taking a one-year leave of absence.

Dick Miller, Pleasant View Church, Goshen, Ind., resigned as distribution and services manager for Mennonite Mutual Aid Sept. 1. Beginning Jan. 1, 1987, he will work independently for MMA as a consultant, providing technical assistance and marketing advice.

John Rempel, Toronto United Mennonite Church, has begun a one-year MCC term in Davao City, the Philippines, where he is teaching theology at Ateneo de Davao University. He received a master's degree in theology from Toronto School of Theology. His mother is Katharina Rempel of St. Catharines, Ont.

Clara Schellenberg, First Church, Winnipeg, has begun a three-month MCC term with SELFHELP Crafts, in Ephrata, Pa. She received a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg.

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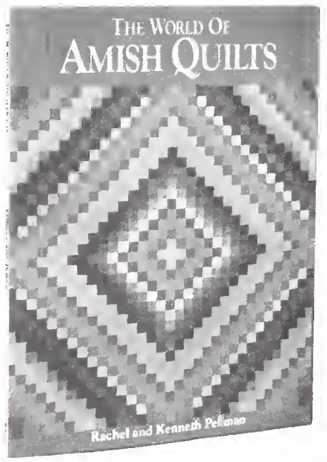
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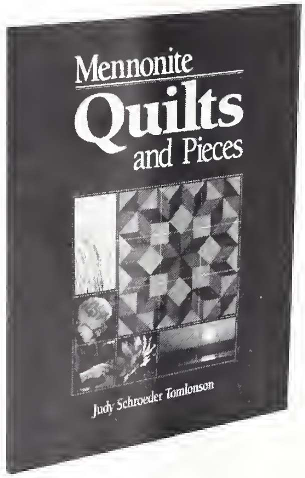
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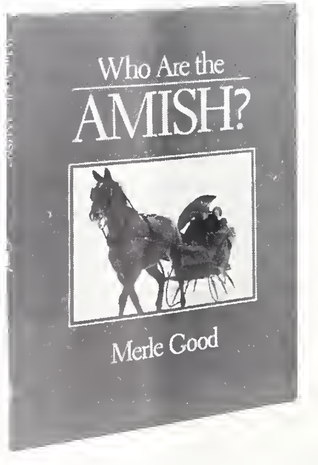
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'We look to our heritage for some answers'

Menno Simons has a message for Central America

Jose Perez

As the year of the 450th anniversary of Menno Simons' conversion draws to a close, Mennonite World Conference invited one Central American church leader to reflect on the relevance of the early Anabaptists for the church today. Jose Perez is secretary of the executive committee of the Honduras Mennonite Church and pastor of a congregation at San Pedro Sula.

I began my adult life as a member of the Communist Party of Honduras. I didn't believe in God; I thought myself an atheist. It took a strong experience—an encounter—for God to change my whole way of thinking.

Later my doubts gradually melted away and I began work as a youth leader at the age of 21. I worked hard in this area until entering the full pastorate in 1972. After working for about seven years in the ministry, I became aware that God had a new direction planned for my life.

The turning point came when I had the opportunity to work with other leaders with the Salvadoran refugees for six months at Colomoncagua. That transformed my life totally, because I never had been so close to a situation of conflict, where victims of conflict lived together. I could see where war leads, where conflicts lead, where violence leads, where oppression and exploitation lead, where the injustice of power leads. After this experience I could not be the same person.

Later I spent two years working with peasant groups, trying to do projects with them. This also convinced me that I had to refocus my faith in God and my concept of Christian practice. That was when I became acquainted with the Mennonite church. When I learned its teachings, its ethics, I knew that this was really what I was looking for.

Frankly, the Honduran Christian churches in general only maintain a vertical relationship with God and forget that people exist all around them. They forget that there is a world full of problems and there are lives being destroyed every day. Exploitation and oppression are not of interest to them. I simply could not be that way; I could not have the same indifference to the problems I saw increasing daily.

So it was that I joined a Mennonite congregation. After a time of working with others as an elder in the congregation at La Ceiba, I was invited by the national committee to get more involved with the church.

As a group of pastors we have been reflecting carefully on what it means to be a Mennonite in a Central America of conflict. That reflection makes us think seriously that we must bind our Christian life more and more every day with the poor, with those who suffer, with the persecuted. We have to struggle for a Christian perspective that looks out more for the interests of those around us who suffer.

This awakening has sprung forth after we have reflected about our rich heritage, as we think of how the church of the 16th century lived a life of persecution in the midst of the great conflicts that arose and of how they suffered.

It seems that we are living in similar eras. Central America today is experiencing unprecedented conflicts, in which those who strive for a better life are increasingly targeted and exposed to danger.

Our Anabaptist heritage is causing us to come to a new way of thinking as a church as we examine the lives of Menno Simons, Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, the experiences of the downtrodden of that time, the collapse of the Peasant Revolt, and as we see an eschatology in which they thought they were going to plant the kingdom of God in those times through the roots of the growing crisis.

This makes us think that we live in similar times. We have looked to our heritage for an answer to a Central America in crisis, and it has helped us a great deal.

The life and ministry of Menno Simons, who restored a church in decadence and guided a pilgrim church, has made us think seriously that our Central America can change and that the church can make a great contribution as it carries out a prophetic ministry, standing for the interests of others and denouncing all that goes against the kingdom of God and the ethics of the kingdom of God. For us the kingdom of God exists already; it is here as we—all Latin Americans for that matter—face crisis.

Today I serve as secretary of the executive committee of the national church, and it is a privilege. The Honduras Mennonite Church is conscious that it must look for a new way of working out the Christian faith, a practice that will let us reflect more realistically our Central American reality. The leadership of the church is convinced that we must step forward as leaders to help bring about a Christian practice that will reflect faithfully this feeling from the grass roots, this sympathy with the people who suffer.

The church is on its way toward a reorientation, a more complete discipleship, that will make us more faithful, firmer, with a holy life bonded to God and united with Jesus and his kingdom.

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Did you know

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Correct spelling

Regarding the article "Video in the Congregation" in the Aug. 26 issue: the first sentence starts, "Generations learned *vini, vidi, vici.*" The correct spelling of the first word is "veni." By the way, I enjoyed reading the excellent article. *J. Alma, 3833 Watson Drive, New Port Richey, FL 33663*

Sept. 3

Continuing the dialogue

Please accept this small contribution to the homosexual dialogue. We took some stones and wrote Bible verses on them. Then we threw the stones at the homosexual. We hoped that the Word of God would really strike home, but he wouldn't listen and ran away. The next time we did this to another homosexual, he got angry and called us dirty names like "Pharisee." He obviously didn't want to obey the Bible verses either. It was only after Peter met Cornelius that the church was able to put the Old Testament teaching about separation into proper biblical perspective. Some of us have been instructed by the angel to visit the homosexual. We have felt his alienation, grief and self-rejection, and we rejoice when he finds that God loves homosexuals. After such an encounter, those same Bible verses must be seen in a new way. *Philip E. Friesen, 2F, No. 4, Lane 82, Sec. 2, Chung Ch'eng Road, Shihlin, Taipei, Taiwan 111, Republic of China*

Sept. 11

Confronting Selective Service

It is with concern that I read the letter by David E. Ortman, Alayne Van Dyck and Rhoda Byler (June 30 issue), where an outline of the status of conscientious objectors under the Selective Service System was given. I add my voice to their collective voice in urging the General Conference Mennonite Church to address this important issue. I agree with the conclusion of David E. Ortman, Alayne Van Dyck and Rhoda Byler when they assert that the system developed by the Selective Service System is "unacceptable to the long-stated positions of the historic peace churches."

As I write these lines I am looking at a leviathan of the 20th century, an American aircraft carrier at anchor in the Vancouver harbor. It is with deep sadness that I recognize that the collective genius of many engineers and tradespeople has been used not for good but for the creation of "destructive potential," not life but for the potential of death. It is not the will of God that men and women of faith should participate in the destruction of human lives. I urge the GCMC to address the problem raised by Ortman, Dyck and Byler immediately. Pray for peace. *Walter Bergen, 4000 W. 11th Ave., Vancouver, BC V6R 2L3*

Sept. 11

'Go and sin no more'

Even a few years ago the topic of homosexuality would never have been considered at a conference. Have we grown? Or have we deteriorated? God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve. It was of Adam and Eve that he said, "It is good." The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was homosexuality. God reacted with fire and brimstone. Is the passage in Romans 1:26-28 not clear enough? A few years hence will we be discussing sex abusers at our conference? Will we conclude that some fathers are *created* that way and cannot help but abuse their young daughters? God does love the sinner. God does not condone sinful practices. "Go and sin no more" are Jesus' words. *Mary Giesbrecht Friesen, 109 Lindenwood Drive E, Winnipeg, MB R3P 1P6*

Sept. 11

A testimony of support

Your anonymous article, "Your Pastor Needs You" (Aug. 26 issue), evokes a quick response. Our first pastoral memories are from the Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church in Inman, Kan., and they received us wonderfully. Time and time again during the years of our service there we were included—a wonderful Thanksgiving celebration with a Dyck family and a happy Christmas celebration with the Unruhs, to name but a few examples. We received gifts of financial and material kind and felt many, many experiences of love and genuine inclusion from people in the Hoffnungsau Church. It was a great introduction to the pastoral ministry. Perhaps, because we started off on such an excellent basis, all of our other pastoral experiences don't quite match up to that first pastorate. We are currently serving our home congregation. That brings many dimensions not typical for a pastor-congregation relationship. We do have family and friendship ties in this congregation and thus don't feel the keen needs as shared in the article. However, my response is an indication that we too feel some of what is being spoken of. There is just no doubt that pastors need the "well done" from others as much as we share and encourage and affirm others in their participation in the life of the church. *Dick Rempel, 46551 Chilliwack Central Road, Chilliwack, BC V2P 1K1*

Sept. 13

Mourning into joy

As an adoptive mother, I read the recent adoption articles and letters in *The Mennonite* with interest. I too experienced years of sorrow. However, now when I see a pregnant mother I am filled with gratitude for a special woman who grew to love her baby, which she carried for nine months and then relinquished shortly after birth so that he could have the type of childhood she wished for him but was unable to provide. Although I would have been pleased to give birth to our son, the method by which he came into our home is first-rate; God placed him here. He has changed our mourning into joy (Jeremiah 31:13). *Vernell Miller, Box 93, Hanston, KS 67849*

Sept. 17

Pavilion of promise?

A highlight of Expo 86 was visiting the Canadian Pacific Pavilion. It was the "pavilion of promise" for me. How exciting to see that other organizations are also doing work for our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, maybe even without being aware of it.

The first exhibit, featuring "The Time Clock," encouraged us to think about what humanity's choices in the past, present and future are contributing to determine creation's destiny. The transition to the next room to view Bob Rogers' film "Rainbow War," an Academy Award nominee for best live-action short, was natural. "The Time Clock" had already set the mood and conditioned the mind to think about choices, consequences, conflict and communication. One of the common choices people have made throughout history is trying to resolve differences by war or some other power struggle.

LETTERS

"Rainbow War" portrays three kingdoms and their differences in an allegorical film. The impression each kingdom has is that their way is best. Once they are aware that other kingdoms exist, they then try to push their values onto the others. However, it is through time and communication that some conflicts and barriers are turned into rainbows. Diversity in color and ideas can be beautiful. . . .

I could not help but draw comparisons to the "I'm right and you're wrong" syndrome of Constantine's crusades or Reagan's politics. Hopefully we can learn even from "secular" pavilions what it means to be pacifists and work at seeing the world from different perspectives. . . . Then we can work at justice, the color "primer" for peace.

Lastly, "Rainbow War" was also the highlight of my children's day at Expo. The advantage to using allegories and parables is known by good teachers. As a teaching parent I will have lots of opportunity to teach these messages of God to my children, talking of them when I sit in my house, and when I walk along the road, and when I lie down and when I rise up (Deuteronomy 11:19, paraphrased). *Maria Siemens Matty, 3042 Tims St., Clearbrook, BC V2T 4G8*

Sept. 18

Far deeper meaning

Can one more letter be tolerated on the sculptural portrayal of Christ as woman? I for one was disappointed that Bernie Wiebe printed an apology for running the picture. I have often been disturbed, offended, amused and appreciative of letters and articles appearing in *The Mennonite*. I take these printed words and visual messages in stride, hoping my spectrum of knowledge and opinions can be widened. It is through the variance of opinions and attitudes that we grow to become better Christians in Christ's kingdom. I thought the picture was most interesting and certainly has been thought of before and will be thought of again. I often think of Christ as a black, Jew, male, female or child . . . [with] many colors and attitudes. Christ's ability to accept all, no matter what race, creed, sex or color, is our salvation. I challenge the people who were so shocked at the "blasphemous" (as one *woman* called it; has she no respect for the female population?) sculpture to become more enduring of other individuals' opinions. Art is a medium that serves as an invitation to express one's inner feelings in a personal and sensitive way. Art is an individual statement of deeper meanings and values. Please interpret the sculpture as symbolism of far deeper meaning rather than a point-blank issue of Christ as male or female. I was surprised many did not bother to think beyond the gender issue. . . . *Janet Neufeld Krehbiel, Route 1, Box 157, McPherson, KS 67460*

Sept. 18

Time to speak up

Art Meyer's tremendous "Commentary" (Sept. 9 issue) and my recent tour of England and Scotland inspires this response. The British people seem more worried about the U.S. administration's actions than about Russia. To date the nuclear opponents have succeeded, peacefully, in preventing the establishment of three dumping sites. Cherynobyl is far more serious than our government or media would have us believe. There is serious feeling that it will never reopen.

While we [in the United States] have the most popular president in our history, he is also the most dangerous. The *Christian Science Monitor* says, "Ronald Reagan loves being president. He's like a little kid with candy." His paranoia about the Soviet Union and Communists plus (as someone has said) a "Hollywood Cowboy desire to have two loaded guns on his hips" has led us into a war economy. I fully agree with Walter Brueggeman. He writes, "Americans and American Christians are incredibly naive about social analysis. How else does the present administration get by with what it gets by with?"

The time has come to speak up. . . . It really scares me when I think of where we'll be economically and otherwise in another two years. We must reread the Bible without a lot of preconceived ideas but boldly and honestly for what it is saying as God's inexorable rule: judgment, mercy and grace. If your best response to terrorism and hostage taking is "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," all we'll have is blind people who can't eat. When the dust settles and the mists are removed we will discover that under the umbrella of a few popular correct statements, none of which has been effective, President Reagan has led our beloved country almost to a point of no return. The farm depression of the '80s is a forerunner of a world fiasco in the '90s just as the one in the '20s led to the '29 crash. . . . *William H. Stauffer, Stone Creek, OH 43840*

Sept. 18

Witnessing for God

Our daily hearty greetings to you and all your staff. Thank you very much for *The Mennonite*, where I find many religious articles and news from different countries for my family and me. It helps a lot to step forward in life in this world. Because we don't have any Christian society around, since I am working in the bank, we are cut off from Christian society. Christian magazines, books and Christian radio programs are our friends. After serving 14 years in the General Conference Mennonite mission in India, I joined this rural bank service. In this field I meet Hindu people mostly; among them I can say I am a witness for God by my work, nature and behavior. Thank God for the guidance. . . . *Vinod Gardia, Bilaspur Raipur Regional Rural Bank, Branch-Tumgaon, Tah.-Mahasamund, District Raipur, M.P., India*

Sept. 22

Special interest in healing

I have read the July 22 issue of *The Mennonite* with great appreciation because of its emphasis on the healing ministry of Christ. This was of special interest to me as chaplain at Mennonite Christian Hospital here in Taiwan. I am a regular reader of *The Mennonite* and enjoy it very much. I feel that it is an excellent religious journal. *Paul Lin, Mennonite Christian Hospital, Meilun, Hwalien, Taiwan, 950 R.O.C.*

Sept. 23

About letters: *To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues, we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. All correspondence to* The Mennonite *should be addressed to Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.* Editor

On being an aware chicken

The importance of community to God's people

Weeden Nichols

The broiler industry is now so refined that the chick-to-chicken-meat-in-the-supermarket cycle is about six weeks. The chicken lives a short time in an artificial environment and is gone before it ever has a chance to realize its chicken-hood.

Without becoming sentimental about chickens, let us further suppose that there is one chicken among the thousands in a broiler house that is not only conscious but self-conscious. Let us suppose that this chicken is not only self-conscious but that it has somehow become aware that there is a beautiful world out there, that there is grass through which to run and gravel to scratch. Think of the loneliness and frustration of that chicken during its entire—albeit short—lifetime as it surveys the artificial nature of its environment, contemplates its impending death and tries vainly to find another chicken that will understand.

My position is not so extreme as that of the chicken. The larger chicken house (human society) is becoming increasingly artificial. More and more our value as individuals is tied to our function—to fit in as a producing/laboring unit, to be highly malleable as a consuming unit (in response to media such as TV), to be available and programmable upon demand to fight whatever enemies national policies happen to create and to be generally compliant.

But I am in touch with a number of other chickens who, like me, have at least a vague awareness of God and God's nature. We share an understanding that there is a greater purpose in life than acquiring and consuming and being entertained. We have visions of the light that are at least similar and of the paths along which we are called to the light.

It seems that the odds are against my becoming an aware chicken. I do not entertain the illusion that my stature is great as an aware chicken or that my being an aware chicken at all is entirely a function of my own merit. For me the progress has been incremental—grasping ideas here and there, finding other pilgrims and sharing the journey for a while, tying ideas together, discarding or modifying an idea that does not reconcile with the rest of the collection.

Gradually, the way has become clearer, and those with whom I am in contact by choice are now mostly chickens of some degree of awareness. I may be guilty, as in Jesus' parable, of thanking God that I am not like the other chickens, but I think there is a difference. I think the Pharisee in the parable was thanking God that he had been created of a higher order than the ordinary man with whom he was comparing himself. What I am thankful for is that, with the help of the Holy Spirit and certain circumstances, I've come as far as I have.

Extending the parable. Once upon a time there was a room in the greater "chicken house" that was occupied almost exclusively by "aware chickens." The new ones had the benefit of the vision of their elders. Communal effort, support and encouragement clarified the shared knowledge of the Creator, of the life to which they were called and of the path they were to follow. The early church was a substantial, already-existing element of the kingdom to come. Whole communities of dedicated individuals kept in touch with one another. Great energy was released, with which the members worshiped, praised, healed, provided for each other, aided the unfortunate who passed their way and by their witness brought the Good News to the world.

Then came Constantine (ca. 280-337). It is now sadly clear what price was paid for the wedding of church and state. Now we can see how the teachings and example of Christ have been distorted over the centuries to serve the interests of earthly rulers. Now we can see how self-serving rulers have prevailed to the detriment of the good

of the people because the faith has been misused to keep the people passive. All that is important. But it is also well-known and much-discussed in the present time, and the church in its many forms and bodies is now prudently and properly distancing itself from governments.

What I am writing about is another effect of Constantine's making the Empire Christian by proclamation. What I am writing about is the effect of immersing the relative handful of believers in a sea of nominal Christians (Christians-by-proclamation), complicated by giving the now-diluted church a hierarchy largely of power-authority leaders (versus spiritual-authority leaders).

Most Christians-by-proclamation never knew they were anything less than the genuine article. Most of them did what they were told and fulfilled obligations. They never knew they were not believers. The believers, for their part, became like the lone aware chicken in the vast chicken house of unknowing chickens.

Those few believers remained together for a while, but even these were gradually divided. They were taught to be responsive to authority and not to each other. No longer was the support and encouragement and example of brothers and sisters an important source of the power to live a Christlike life. No longer did the child learn from the earliest years to apply the teachings and example of Christ to every aspect of daily living by constant example and instruction from the community. Now the functionaries of the hierarchical church did the teaching. Now the carrot-and-stick, reward-and-punishment device was used to control the behavior of the individual as desired by authority. Now, when the occasional aware chicken raised its head above the rest of the flock and looked around, the head was likely to be cut off.

This is an overstatement, in some ways, of the pre-Reformation church. There did remain leaders of genuine spiritual authority and communities where people daily lived the gospel. Unfortunately this was largely reserved for monastic communities and was not a way of life available to the ordinary people.

"I do not entertain the illusion that my stature is great as an aware chicken or that my being an aware chicken at all is entirely a function of my own merit."

In quest of community. It seems to me that a community, the central focus for the everyday lives of all the members, is the ideal setting for the growth of faith and the empowerment of believers. Concern of each member for individual salvation does not outweigh concern for the community and the kingdom in general. Openness and responsiveness by each member to the other is reinforced. Those in positions of authority and responsibility operate in the servant-among-servants mode, from a base of spiritual authority and not power-authority. Leaders must be sure that in promoting responsiveness to their authority they do not undermine the authority of the members as teachers/helpers/comforters/healers of each other.

In the last few hundred years communities of believers of this type have grown up. They have not been perfect or ideal but often in the general mold that I consider ideal. They seem, generally, to have been purified and reinforced by persecution and adversity.

These communities of believers, however, seem to have been defocused and diluted by prosperity. In many cases a few generations of prosperity seem to have been able to do what persecution never could—change the focus of members of the believing community to secular concerns and worldly ambitions, drive wedges between the members and generally dilute the community so that the crucial, critical mass no longer obtained.

The reasonable and obvious question is, If there is any validity to this whole view, what do we *do*? I don't have all the answers. (I don't even have all the questions.) But here is what I wish to do.

I do not see separating myself totally from the world as a suitable or available option for me. I want the focus of my life to be in the believing community. Of my activities out in the world I aim to make 100 percent of them consistent with the life of Christ I am trying to live, to make my time out in the world an occasion of quiet witness. I wish to serve others both within the believing community and outside it as my energies and gifts allow. I wish to be available to others, according to their needs and my resources. I wish to live peacefully and do justice, and I wish to promote peace and justice. I wish to discern what is right and do it, primarily because God is God and right is right. Most importantly, I wish to promote and reinforce the life and growth of the believing community and its members.

I want my witness and service and discernment to be at least as much a function of the community as of myself as an individual. Only by focusing our lives and efforts in the believing community, constantly helping to purify it, preserve it and promote its life and health can we improve the chances for present and future human chickens in the great chicken house of human society. Only by the convergence of the Spirit and our efforts (genuinely sacrificial efforts not excluded) can there be a setting in which all of us human chickens have a chance of being aware chickens. Only then can the aware chickens join their lives to build the kingdom out of this vast chicken house of human society.

Weeden Nichols, Route 6, Box 53, Salina, KS 67401, is a member of Salina Mennonite Church.

books

Shalom in action

Jimshoes in Vietnam *by James R. Klassen (Herald Press, 1986, 400 pages)*

Reviewed by James E. Metzler, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517

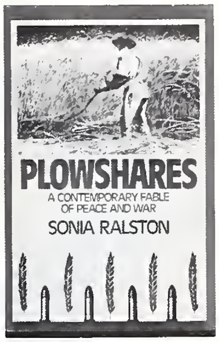
You will not find *Jimshoes in Vietnam* duplicating what you have read about Vietnam. In fact you will find little overlap with the subject in any library of mission texts. Many books have been written by and about missionaries involved in revolutionary settings. Yet rarely has the story of Christians in transition been told so powerfully and dramatically.

Klassen's experience, as part of the Mennonite team that chose to stay in Vietnam during the change in government, points the way to a refreshing and invigorating stance. Here is a day-by-day account of Christians accepting new social realities and discerning the right relationship with a changing government and society. The reader gets caught up in the ongoing struggle between faithfulness and integrity on the one hand while maintaining a sense of citizenship and social responsibility on the other.

No two responses are identical. Out of that drama, filled with apprehension and idealism, emerge all kinds of vested interests and mixed motivations. Social upheavals call forth humanity's best and worst. And the book records the full range of responses from total rejection to complete acceptance of the new order.

The story is told in journal fashion, recounting the sequence of Jim's experiences and encounters. He is careful to share accurately the perspectives and concerns of the Vietnamese with whom he dialogues. The reader feels the confusion, fear and hope that seethes in such a cauldron.

JIMSHOES
IN
VIET
NAM
The eyewitness account of an American Christian who stayed behind after the "fall" of Saigon.
James R. Klassen



Klassen demonstrates well the difficult task an overseas church worker in settings of civil conflict has in maintaining one's integrity while empathetically hearing and interacting with all sides. This was the glaring failure of most American missionaries through the decades of civil strife. It is draining to hold to a stance of justice and reconciliation for all in the midst of extreme violence, confusion and preservation instincts. It is easy to doubt if even closest friends understand and believe your perspectives as you feel pulled in both directions.

This gives rise to my main criticism of the book: its review of the old arguments about the war. Klassen is aware of the half-truths and myths still shaping the views of Americans regarding their intervention in Indochina. He struggles at points with a need to set the record straight or to spell out the presuppositions of his concerns. However, it is not a serious distraction for readers who already know the facts. And it does help the youth of today work through the issues with Klassen in light of the data and alternatives as he saw them.

Though not deliberately structured as such, *Jimshoes in Vietnam* is an excellent example of shalom in action. With little preplanned strategy or conscious modeling, Klassen simply incarnated the freeing, empowering shalom of God in a crisis moment of history.

A major irony behind Klassen's account is that Mennonite workers in Vietnam were criticized by other missionaries for their belief in the theology of presence. For years we received little encouragement for our concern about high visibility programs heavily dependent on Western resources, logistics and tactics. We were viewed by many as quite naive and ineffective missionaries.

In 1976 Jim Klassen was the only U.S. church worker among those hundreds who was still carrying on a full-ordered ministry of evangelism, baptism, teaching and discipling in Vietnam. The impact of this book is its testimony that a mission based on incarnational theology can make the adjustments needed to continue with sensitivity and effectiveness in the midst of radical transitions.

The Western church needs such a testimony. Missions must be called to acknowledge the consequences of their associations, actions and attitudes. Klassen makes no pretense about modeling the way for others. But his is a story that must be told.

The book is equally vital for those Mennonites being drawn to more simple missions who just preach the gospel and evangelize the unsaved. They seem to feel that Mennonites make things so complex and involved. Klassen's account shows that "peace evangelism" rooted in authentic presence among the people was the only approach that stood the test. The record of Mennonite mission and service work deserves a closer look by our own people.

Position opening

Administrative assistant position is open with **Mennonite World Conference** beginning **Dec. 1.** Qualifications include experience with transcribing dictation and word processing. Maturity and organizational skills are also important. Salaried position.

Contact:
Jane E. Friesen
Mennonite World Conference
528 E. Madison St.
Lombard, IL 60148
(312) 953-2320.

Peace made easy

Plowshares: A Contemporary Fable of Peace and War *by Sonia Ralston (Paulist Press, 1986, 61 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, assistant editor

Plowshares tells the brief (it can be read in a half hour) story of two generic groups of people who live on either side of a mountain and are sworn enemies. Their innocent, rural existence is regularly interrupted by wars. Eventually two shepherd boys from the respective groups meet and become friends. They decide their peoples fight because they don't know each other. Finally the women, plus an agricultural miracle, end the fighting and bring peace.

This is all nice, but it's too pat, too easy. And why is it called contemporary? It contains none of the complexity of modern life or justice issues anywhere in the world. The story uses 19th-century imagery to tell us what we already know—we need to stop fighting and start talking. If it spurs many people to act on this knowledge, that's great.

Freely united

Lois D. Deckert

Bang! Bang! Bang! The last nail is in my box. I'm ready to crawl in. The tight fit limits me but I pull the lid shut with its big, black, stenciled label. The only thing that identifies me is a label. I am unnamed in my safe, tight, almost airless, almost soundproof box. It gets stuffier and stuffier. I become irritable and twitchy. But I am safe.

Within my safe box I hear the wind of God's Spirit worrying the box, though I cannot feel it. The wind whispers, whispers around the edges, seeking a crack. The whispering holds a name—not "oh labeled one" but a name, my name. The more I hear my name the more uncomfortable I become. I must emerge.

Pop! The lid is off. I breathe the breath of life in great gulps of freshness. I feel the wind of the Spirit blowing gently. As I look around at the wonder about me I long to fly into freedom, the vast unknown, scary freedom. Can I?

Are we who have been given the gift of freedom in Christ ready for it? Do we make sure our feet stay safely in our boxes? Do we turn our faces only to those in boxes that are labeled just like ours? Do we learn each other's names? Can we learn the names of all the labeled ones and by naming them love them?

God names us with a love beyond our knowing. Because God named us we have no right to leave others unnamed. And yet in our fear we label each other. Dare we reject those named by God? Dare we continue to use labels on each other? Is labeling a way to avoid loving? True love, you know, conquers fear and makes labels of no value.

Sometimes I want to weep as I see us label each other in the General Conference, rejecting each other when the boxes we've built for ourselves are not like the boxes of others. We are a conference made up of many churches all of whose membership in the conference is voluntary. No commands are imposed by the conference upon the congregations. The command that binds us all is the command to love each other as God loves us. Our congregational autonomy works only when we are responsible to each other and committed to each other in God's spirit of unconditional love.

Called to work as a staff member within the General Conference, I often feel I want to communicate with you, my people.

I want to call you by your name just as our God has done.

As I come into your house, don't turn your back to me.

As I call you gently by the only name I know, don't cover your ears.

As I touch you gently on the shoulder, don't shrug the touch away.

Sometimes you tell me I don't know how to speak or touch or come to you.

Sometimes you throw me out of your life like you do my crumpled letters thrown into your wastebasket.

What can I do?

Does my love mean nothing?

You must know I care.

Don't you want to know my name at all?

May God grant us the freedom and courage to call each other by name in love, Christlike love. For we do belong to each other.

Lois D. Deckert, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, is editor of Window to Mission, *the bimonthly magazine of Women in Mission.*

The 44th triennial session of the General Conference Mennonite Church, held July 21-27 in Saskatoon, celebrated the coming of the kingdom of God and restated our sense of belonging.

EDITORIAL

A farewell and an introduction

We'll see you again

I imagine you'll look at this page wistfully, Bernie. You've said your farewell to *The Mennonite* and its readers. Now I have the privilege to represent others in returning the favor.

Readers know the things you've written about being a church family, about dialogue, about listening to one another. Others have heard you speak, met you and become acquainted. I've served under you, rather with you, as your assistant. But I've never felt under you because of the way you've exemplified servant leadership. You've encouraged me, forgiven me freely and challenged me to grow. You've been a friend.

I've heard enough stories from you to know you've touched many hurting people. They seem to sense your openness, your compassion. I believe they sense an open heart in one who has suffered. And out of those wounds you have allowed God's love to fill you and flow out to others.

As a friend, then, I say with others, farewell. And I voice the wish, and the expectation, to see you again. *Gordon Houser*

May I introduce myself?

Even if you didn't ask, as my new employer you have the right to know about the new editor of *The Mennonite*.

I was a TCK, a "third culture kid," and I thank Tobia Vandenburg for giving me a name for that lingering sadness that children of overseas missionaries experience when they change countries. My taproot is in India, in General Conference Mennonite missions.

I am also grateful to my parents for giving me a grounding in what I understand to be Anabaptism: (1) the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, (2) the necessity that the Bible be my rule for life, (3) a synthesis of the Great Commission (to "go") and the Great Commandment (to love), a synthesis of holiness and discipleship, and (4) that the Sermon on the Mount is for us, now.

Let me say a bit more about each of these. First, the pre-eminence of Jesus. When Jake Enz baptized me, he gave me John 15:16. Over the 37 years since then, I have been sustained by taking that verse personally, especially during wilderness times. I believe that we can always come to the Lord's personal affirmation: ". . . I chose you and appointed you. . . ." In Jesus all things hold together (Colossians 1:17).

Second, the authority and application of Scripture in my life. I am judged by Scripture; it examines me. Most recently I have felt judged by Jesus' words in John 9 following the dramatic aftermath of the blind man receiving his sight. And I begin this new job of editing sobered by my inadequate sight—limited until we see "face to face" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Third, the coming together of evangelism and peace. I believe that missions/evangelism brings peace. Last Sunday I learned that jails were empty and the courts idle in Rochester, N.Y., after Charles Finney's evangelistic campaign of the mid-1850s and the following spiritual renewal. Others have helped us understand this. Menno Simons is credited with saying that true evangelical faith . . . clothes the naked, feeds the hungry, comforts the sorrowful, binds up that which is wounded. More recently Bernie Wiebe helped us when he wrote, "Live and walk the walk, not just talk the talk." In obedience I attended a Friendship Evangelism Seminar six Saturdays ago, and in obedience I watched (in the tradition of Ezekiel, see 3:17) as the nuclear train sped through Wellington, Kan., eight Saturdays ago. I commit myself to a balance in the pages of *The Mennonite*.

Fourth, the Sermon on the Mount is for us now. I was amazed to learn that some groups within Christendom try to dodge this. (Martin Luther, whom we acknowledge this week, was one who did; he considered legalistic the Anabaptists' emphasis on holy living of the believing Christian.)

I believe that our job description as followers of Christ is clear in the Gospels and that the urgency is indisputable.

Please join me in praying, "Lord, show me how I can be faithful to you."

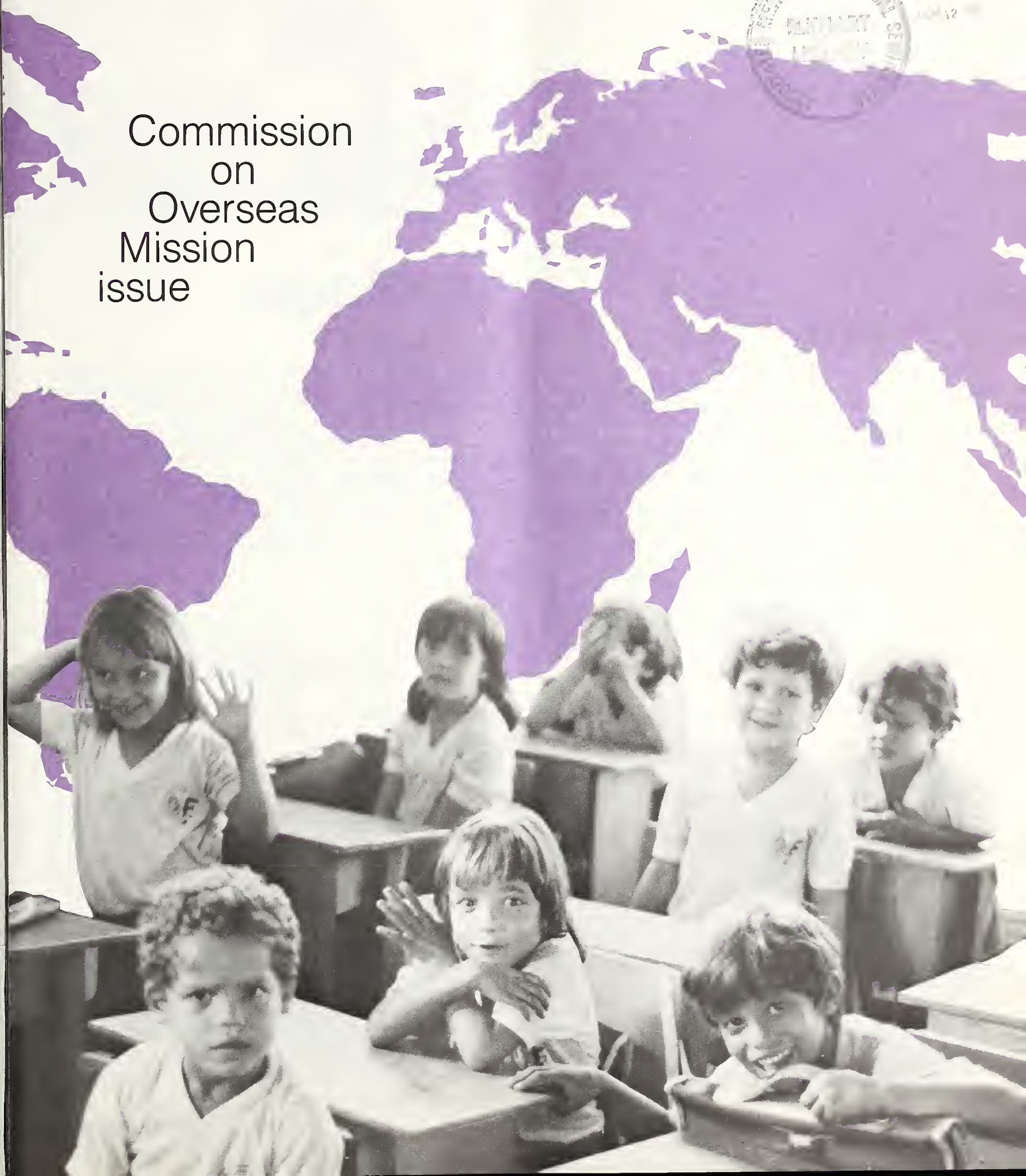
Even so, come Lord Jesus. *Muriel T. Stackley*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:21 NOVEMBER 11, 1986

Commission on Overseas Mission issue



THE MENNONITE
Commission
on
Overseas
Mission
issue

These children attend the "Happy Way" Centro Educacional school, which is attached to and operated by Vila Itatiaia Mennonite Church in Goiânia, Brazil. Read the rest of the story on pages 490 and 491.

PROLOGUE

It's a new day. Time was when the authors in an issue of *The Mennonite* devoted to overseas missions would have been only from Canada and the United States. No more.

Having committed ourselves as a conference to going into all the world to preach the gospel, we can joyfully listen to mature Christians from our mission fields. In this issue we hear from two: Antonio Carlos de Faria from Brazil and José Chuquín from Colombia.

Preparing this issue, I went upstairs to the Commission on Overseas Mission offices to verify the picture caption on page 493. Glendon Klaassen identified José Chuquín and said, "I'm amazed at what a dynamic leader José has become. Reitha and I knew him as a fledgling student, growing up without the care of a mother but with an encouraging father. Look at him now—an officer in the Colombian conference of Mennonites. Recently he asked me to send him a set of the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*."

Glendon and his colleagues (Jeannie Zehr, Erwin Rempel, Bruno Bergen and John Sommer) coordinated the feature articles in this issue. For further information about our conference's overseas mission, contact any of them (or Peter Voran) at Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100. Jake Harms, COM coordinator for Canada, is also newly available for queries: 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781. *mts*

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THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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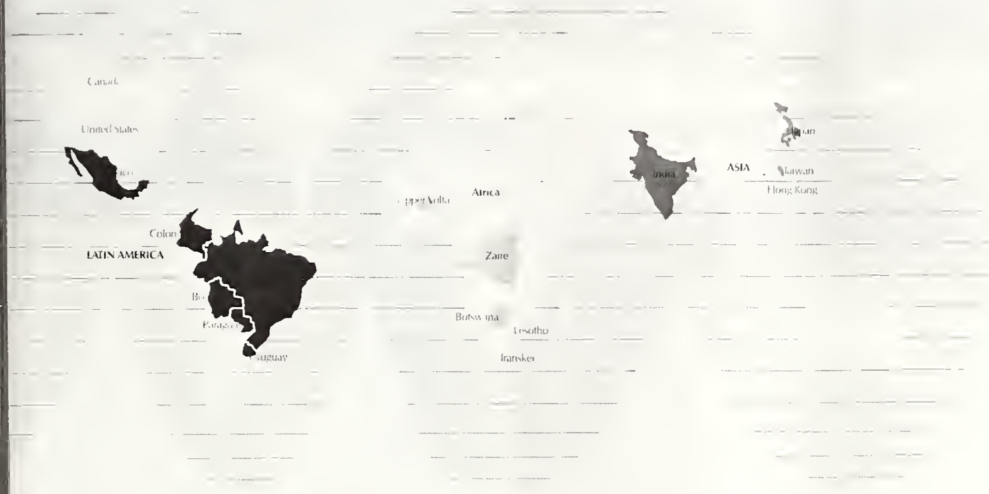
The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Erwin Rempel

The Commission on Overseas Mission is at work in 17 countries.



God gave us a ministry of wholeness

A poor Brazilian farm worker, Francisco Alves, from the northeastern state of Ceara hung himself after he had been accused of stealing a sack of rice in the looting of a food store.

"My worries have been no job for four months and now this case of the rice," wrote Francisco in a farewell note to his family. "Everybody has to go through difficulties in life, but this was the worst."

After weeks of no rain, thousands of starving rural workers and small landholders left their homes and went to nearby towns. Although most of the town invasions were peaceful and limited to protests to local authorities or requests to shopkeepers for food on credit, there were three reported incidents of looting.

A group of 500 men (one of whom was Francisco Alves) stripped the municipal food market bare in the small town of Senador Pompeu.

This tragic account from Brazil, the country where our family had the privilege of serving as Commission on Overseas Mission workers, illustrates only a sample of the consequences of evil in our broken world: drought, famine, exploitation, violence, crime, disease, prejudice, idolatry, racism, self-righteousness and hollow religious practices. Ours is truly a fallen world with broken relationships: between human beings, between human beings and nature and between human beings and God, their creator.

Hope for healing. Just as for Humpty-Dumpty, there have been many proposed solutions to restore wholeness to this broken and fallen world. Economic, political and even religious solutions have been designed

as cure-alls. Each has had some measure of success. None has provided the permanent solution to the consequences of evil.

Christians claim that the only permanent solution to the consequences of evil is Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures: "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Colossians 1:19-20).

The Christian faith further claims that human and cosmic reconciliation, while accomplished by Christ, is ministered to the world through Christ's redeemed body, the church. In short, God has given us a ministry of wholeness: to the whole range of evils plaguing humankind within the whole world (2 Corinthians 5).

Having accepted these biblical claims, some practical questions must be answered. Is the church responsible to minister to every consequence of evil? Is ministering to one form of human need more significant than another? When ministering overseas, is the Commission on Overseas Mission responsible for multiple forms of ministry or should it concentrate only on sharing the Good News of a restored relationship between God and each human being? In view of the tarnished legacy of overseas mission complicity in the age of imperialism, can and should North American missionaries take any responsibility for ministry overseas today?

Forty missionaries, staff, resource people and commission members addressed these issues at a major consultation in 1985. The result was a decision to reaffirm a COM priority to engage in ministries of wholeness—to the whole range of the consequences of evil in the whole world. The following will explain the why, what and where of COM ministries of wholeness.

Why should COM engage in ministries of wholeness?

The kingdom of God is the key to understanding ministries of wholeness. The mission of God to all of creation is summed up in the kingdom of God. Throughout the Old and New Testaments the constant point of reference is the kingdom of God. Jesus understood everything he did and said in the light of the kingdom of God: "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God . . . because that is why I was sent" (Luke 4:43). All that God began to do in and through Jesus Christ was to be continued in and through Christ's redeemed followers (John 20:21).

Recognizing the kingdom of God as referring only to the "inner life" or the "afterlife" is not necessarily accurate; it is regrettably incomplete. While the full consummation of the kingdom of God awaits the future, it is neither

limited to the future nor the inner recesses of the soul. God's kingdom is here and now as well as future. The church of Jesus Christ is called to kingdom ministries today in anticipation of the fullness of the kingdom beyond history.

What kingdom ministries of wholeness should COM engage in?

Kingdom ministries are as broad as the whole range of human and cosmic evil, bondage and suffering. This certainly includes the call to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. All people everywhere, religious or irreligious, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, literate or illiterate, must be called to conversion, to repent and believe the gospel. This includes Animists, Spiritists, Buddhists, Hindus, Marxists, Muslims, atheists and agnostics.

Kingdom ministries respond to the whole range of human and cosmic need. Howard A. Snyder correctly observes, "When Christians catch a vision of the kingdom of God, their sight shifts to the poor, the orphan, the widow, the refugee, the wretched of the earth, to God's future—to the concerns of justice, mercy and truth" (1983: 11).

Overseas mission history is plagued by popular stereotypes of the narrow-minded missionary whose sole concern was to save souls. If these stereotypes were ever a reflection of reality they were no more so than they are of ministry in North America. But the stereotype persists even among those in the church who ought to know better.

Since the beginning of the overseas mission program of the General Conference in 1900 COM has been engaged in ministries of wholeness, addressing the whole range of human need. Evangelism, church planting, leadership training for church ministries, vocational training, schools, preventative and curative medical services, agricultural and community development and a host of other kingdom ministries have always been integral to the mission task.

A recent tendency, at least in the thinking of many North American Mennonites, has been to reduce overseas ministry to that of service and development. Feeding the hungry is preferred to calling people to faith in Christ. This is often the result of erroneous stereotypes of missionary activity, vicarious guilt for the evils of the colonial era and a loss of conviction that Jesus Christ is unique in a world of religious pluralism. It is of vital importance to understand that kingdom ministries of wholeness call people to faith in Jesus Christ and also to experience liberation from all that enslaves both in time and in eternity.

Where should COM engage in kingdom ministries?

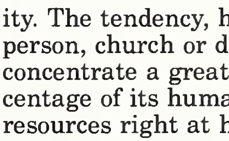
Kingdom ministries of wholeness are not only coextensive with the whole range of human need, they are also coextensive with the whole inhabited world. Three concerns generally surface: Is overseas mission only a one-way street from North America to the Third World? Is it not true that visa restrictions are diminishing the possibilities of overseas ministry? Should we really be ministering overseas when the need and opportunity for mission is so great in North America?

Overseas mission is not only a one-way street from North America to the two-thirds world. It is a two-way street. There is mutuality in missions. Genuine partnership characterizes mission-church relationships in spite of inaccurate stereotypes of missionary paternalism. Neither individual missionaries nor mission agencies enter into new ministry initiatives without extensive consultation, cooperation and partnering relationships with overseas churches and local leadership.

While visa restrictions are real in some countries, the more accurate picture of our world is one of nearly unlimited opportunity for Christian ministries of wholeness. There are far more open doors for ministry overseas than there are personnel and financial resources available from our churches in North America. Ministry in the whole world is not limited by visa restrictions as much as by limited vision and commitment.

The concern about needs and opportunities in North America is more complex. Certainly the General Conference Mennonite Church must do mission in North America. No one denies that this is an important priority. The tendency, however, is for any person, church or denomination to concentrate a greater and greater percentage of its human and financial resources right at home. Our conference is not pouring excessive resources into overseas mission. It may not be easy to agree on what constitutes an excessive amount of resources overseas. It does seem to me that to send 143 people out of 63,000 members as missionaries and to spend $3.2 million overseas out of more than $35 million in total General Conference giving to all causes is neither excessive nor disproportionate.

The General Conference Mennonite Church needs continuous renewal of its global vision for the mission of the church. Kingdom resources have been entrusted to us for ministries of wholeness—to the whole range of need and in the whole world. •



Erwin Rempel (1701 W. 4th, Newton, KS 67114) is executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission and a former missionary to Brazil.

CENTRO EDUCACIONAL
Caminho Feliz

The school (Centro Educacional, Caminho Feliz "Happy Way") is attached to Vila Itatiaia Mennonite Church in Goiânia, Brazil.

A Mennonite congregation reaches into its community

Allowing the truth to shine

Antonio Carlos de Faria

I have been asked to write about our experience in Vila Itatiaia here in Goiânia, Brazil, particularly in the area of the connection between evangelism and social action. Our experience is not a traditional one, and this both confronts and motivates us.

Our work has been divided into the so-called areas of evangelism (preaching, teaching, counseling), social action (school, community) and ecumenical ministry (being open to other church groups).

This division is instructive; it helps to see the type of gospel we have tried to live and preach. Since the time of the planning of our church, we have always had a clear desire and conviction to have a social involvement. Although we do not know all the influences in this desire, we are able to point out some.

The community has a shortage of schools and unsatisfactory teaching. The church desires to participate as a body in community actions like any other citizen group. Our church also desires to have a channel of evangelism, through direct actions of families in relationships. We want to create a Christian atmosphere in the community (in a city where there is little community spirit). We have an open channel through the church, school, amusements, community gardening—works that improve life in the community.

"We do not want to create a theology of works, but we do want to share with our brothers and sisters our sense of preaching and the practical life of faith."

In all of these items we have had successes and failures, and when we are tested and experience difficulties we stop to think of the role we play. It is hard to make a careful evaluation because of our close involvement and our lack of experience. I will speak now of two specific points: the church and the school.

With regard to the church, there is not much doubt about how to do evangelism, but we have problems with contextualization with an unfavorable evangelical tradition. The same hearts that are hungry for the true gospel are hardened by so much falsity between the saying and the doing. We believe that we have been successful, but we are not satisfied with this. We need to be doing more—not by ourselves but by the free action of the Spirit and through the giving of our lives to the cause of Christ.

With regard to social action, we have had discreet participation in the community through meetings and community events. More activity has been in education, through the school called Caminho Feliz (Happy Way). The school (kindergarten through grade 2) is directed and maintained by the church. It was started two years after the beginning of church meetings, operating the first year with three classes and 25 students. Now in the second year the success has been so great that it has been necessary to double the classes to 105 students. This number is limited by the lack of space to meet the requests.

The statistical success is great, but we are not satisfied with the results for the dreamed-of quality of teaching. As in so many areas, we have had difficulty putting into practice the dreams God gives us. We struggle with financial problems, the teaching staff and even questions about the initiation of the project. Truly we have not had success in transmitting to some within our group the spirit that has inspired us to start this work.

Because this is a pioneer work for us, we confront doubts among some in the directions from the missions. Nevertheless, no matter how difficult it appears to be, we sense God responding, "Go ahead." We find in the Bible the impulse to continue. For example, we see the Beatitudes and the words of Jesus saying in effect, "Go ahead. Be with those who cry, with the gentle, with those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, with the pure in heart, with the peacemakers, with those who search for justice even though persecuted, with the injured." By this the kingdom will be preached and blessings poured out.

In our context these Beatitudes have a flavor of energetic children of God who give themselves and rejoice in the participation in the alive and active kingdom of God. We are able to feel love in the activities in which we are involved.

We do not want to create a theology of works, but we do want to share with our brothers and sisters our sense of participation in the preaching and the practical life of faith. We lament that we are not more efficient and more available to allow the truth to shine as a light in this community of Vila Itatiaia, where perhaps 6,000 people earnestly desire to know Christ. Perhaps all have heard of Jesus, but few give themselves to him as absolute Lord of their lives. •

Marilda and Antonio Carlos de Faria are the pastoral couple at Vila Itatiaia Church, Goiânia, Brazil. Antonio is studying for a doctorate in physics at Brazilian National University in San Carlos.

Restoring the whole person (Romans 12:9-21, 13:8-10)

Hilda Epp

In Isaac Watts' rephrasing of Psalm 23 ("My Shepherd Shall Supply My Need") he closes with a poignant line which, though written in a different context, must surely be the hymn-prayer of every alien in a foreign land. "No more a stranger, nor a guest, but like a child at home." To be an alien can be a stressful experience in which one soon learns the value of a supportive community.

To be an alien is to experience separation and loneliness, a situation easily understood because of physical displacement. Another experience of separation is that of alienation. Although the source and cause may be less easily identified, it is no less real and equally distressing. One can quickly bring to mind many examples of alienation, ranging from ridicule of accent or clothes (however insignificant the detail) to more subtle ostracism of people with values or principles unlike our own.

How does Christ call us to deal with alienation? Regardless of the root cause, our ministry of reconciliation must include the whole person. Jesus came to effect our reconciliation with God. In doing so, he clearly demonstrated a wholistic approach to people. Among the "undesirables" for whom he took time and showed concern were children, tax collectors, gentiles, prostitutes, the poor, the blind and the mentally ill. He taught us to deal with entire problems rather than just symptoms.

Paul in his letter to Christians at Rome reflects this teaching (Romans 12:9-21, 13:8-10). We are called to be actively involved in showing appreciation and empathy, practicing hope, patience and steadfast prayer in trying times and sharing hospitality and material goods—all in a spirit of humility and peace. Controlling all is the comprehensive commandment to love our neighbors. At the heart of our concern, the word of the church to the world must be, first and last, the word of reconciliation in Jesus Christ. The historian H. G. Wells never claimed to be particularly religious, yet he observed, ". . . Until a man has found God, he begins at no beginning, he works to no end. Life falls into place only with God."

Meet our friend

Such was surely the experience of our friend "Beely" at Mennonite Christian Hospital in Taiwan. Beely lived in a small Taroko village just out of Hualien, and came into Hualien every day to work on yard maintenance at the hospital.

Hilda Epp is a former missionary (1972-1986) to Taiwan. She and her husband, Carl, are living at 83 Rutgers Bay, Winnipeg, MB R3T 3G9. Their sons are David and Weldon.

As a tribe the Taroko people have suffered the displacement and economic disparity often visited on an aboriginal people by a dominant group in society. Over the years the stress of financial struggles and social stigma have caused many to lose self-esteem. The result has been a tragically high incidence of suicides and alcoholism.

Beely was caught in the web of alcoholism. Although once a Christian, he had become "alienated from the life of God" (Ephesians 4:18). His struggles became more apparent as he occasionally reported to work under the influence of alcohol. Eventually, in spite of great patience and the counsel of his co-workers, he lost his job due to absenteeism and intoxication.

Several years ago Beely was admitted to the hospital in physical agony from years of alcohol abuse. Did Beely need to hear again the gospel of repentance and reconciliation with God, or did the solution to his problems lie in the hands of physicians and social workers? Impressive evidence exists to establish the close, complex relationships between the mind, emotions and body. Had social or spiritual alienation resulted in alcoholism or was alcoholism the cause of alienation?

Physicians and paramedics attended to Beely's health needs, often with a prayer or word of encouragement. Co-workers came to visit during their lunch breaks, social workers looked at the family situation and the chaplains ministered to him. Hope was gradually nurtured and faith restored. Beely once more experienced the peace of sins forgiven and freedom from alcohol dependance.

Such news is too good to keep. Although he suffered from permanent liver damage, which ultimately caused his death, Beely spent his last few years in a ministry of reconciliation to others in his community who were suffering from alcoholism.

What gave Beely the courage to reach out once more toward reconciliation with God and freedom from the distress of alcoholism? It was the support of the Christian community ministering to his physical, emotional and spiritual needs, showing acceptance, dealing with the whole man to restore him to wholeness in Christ.

My testimony

José Chuquín

As I sit down to write this article I think through the various stages of my life in which the Lord has shown his presence. I do it with a sense of gratitude for all his mercy, love and care for me and his constant challenge to me to serve him better.

I was born in a rural town in Colombia and grew up on a small coffee farm. At age 9 I attended school for the first time. During my primary and secondary school years, I had to discontinue my education for four years to be able to work and earn to continue schooling. In my college years I also combined education with part-time work. This process became quite meaningful to my whole life. In many ways God provided me with resources, sometimes through fine Christian friends in the form of gifts and other times through work.

During my first two years of elementary school I attended the public/government school system. Every day I had to walk to and from school—a couple of hours. In 1958 my father became ill and as part of his medical treatment he needed the help of a nurse. This service was part of the Mennonite presence in those days in the Cachipay school and church. And it was through this interaction that we became acquainted with Mennonites, with the gospel and, more importantly, with the person of Jesus Christ. In 1959 I invited Jesus into my life, and ever since I have experienced this guidance and the joy of trying to be his disciple.

As I mentioned, it was through service that the Mennonites in Cachipay presented Christ to my father, to me, to my sister Egda and to many other people in and outside our neighborhood. Anabaptism has become one of my fields of interest and I have enjoyed and felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in my process of discovery, understanding and looking for ways to apply in my life, my family's life and the life of my congregation a contemporary and contextualized model of the Anabaptist vision.

For the last 10 years I have been involved with the special ministry of commitment to the process of wholistic social self-development, by which needy people will gain the necessary sufficiency at the maximum possible level and in all the dimensions or aspects of individual and social life with at least three specific emphases: (1) spiritual, moral, ethical areas, which refer to the intangible but real values—not of human or natural origin but from God in terms of salvation and Christian life; (2) cultural, technical, scientific, community, civic and political areas, which refer to values of human civilization; and (3) economic areas, which provide the material means to live.

To continue with this commitment and as part of my Christian pilgrimage and work experience as World Vision field director in Colombia, I have developed two principles.

First, to continue to seek short- and long-term results on the basis of the biblical Christian mandates "to love our Lord and love our neighbor and to make disciples among the peoples of the world." This also means that the Word of God is the primary source or sense and direction to carry out this commitment to the poor.

Second, in order to concentrate on these mandates, I have also defined the people to whom we in Colombia would like to minister and serve. They are the poor. I need to continue to study and understand poverty, including its roots and consequences. This needs to be done from a biblical, historical, socioeconomic and political frame of reference.

We also minister to the lost. The knowledge of the person of Jesus Christ and the full acceptance of his call to discipleship is still needed in Colombia. Finally, we minister to the body of Christ. I praise God for the opportunity I have to share this vision with disciple communities—local and national expressions of the body of Christ. We try to reach mutual understanding about the wholistic mission of the church as it applies to Colombia. We commit together to continue to implement actions that will make it possible for the Colombian church to be faithful. The richness of this experience is to be able to do it within an interdenominational context.

In order to carry out this biblical mandate and vision of service to the poor I need to realize that this is part of the call that Jesus makes to become his follower. The kind of mess we live in (oppression, injustice, marginalization of huge numbers of poor people) is so big and so deep and so tall. We need many disciples truly committed to this cause and willing to provide a type of service that will deal mainly with causes, without ignoring that some effects also need attention.

Aside from trying to understand more deeply the Word of God and to find out more about the wholistic social self-development mentioned above and to find out the best administration to carry out this vision, I enjoy my family life. Laura and I promote marriage enrichment retreats for Christian couples, and she is involved and committed to family counseling. We also enjoy our participation in our church on the local and national level. We have three children: Nicolas (8), Julia (5) and Daniel (4). We are expecting a fourth one.

José Chuquín (third from right with a local planning group) is treasurer of the Conference of Mennonites in Colombia, a member of Teusaquillo Mennonite Church and director of World Vision of Colombia. His address is Apartado Aéreo 1434, Bogotá, D.E., Colombia.

Anabaptism and Latin America

Robert "Jack" Suderman

Test your ability to "stereotype." Match these names of people and groups (a to i) with the quotations (1-11). Answers are in the footnotes at the end.

a. a Catholic pope

b. Latin American priests

c. an Evangelical theologian

d. a Baptist pastor

e. Catholic bishops

f. a conservative Evangelical organization

g. Argentinian Baptist Church

h. Argentinian Mennonite Church

i. a liberation theologian

1. "Violence is neither Christian nor evangelical."

2. "It is true that revolutionary insurrection can be legitimate where there is manifest, long-standing tyranny which would do damage to the fundamental, personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country."

3. "We simply want to give a new dimension to a recognized principle: the right of any unjustly oppressed community to react, even violently, against its unjust oppressor."

4. "We, as Christians, are on the side of non-violence; and this is in no way an option for passivity and weakness. Opting for non-violence means believing more strongly in the power of truth, justice and love than in the power of hatred, war and killing."

5. ". . . When an ideology appeals to violence, it thereby admits its own weakness and inadequacy."

6. "It is obvious that the civilization based on the economy of war has no future. Martin Luther King was right when he said, 'Today the alternative is not between violence and non-violence but between non-violence and non-existence.' "

7. "Now again we are confronted by a situation which is forcing many young people and adults, men and women, to opt for violence in order to prevent a greater violence. In this situation we need theological reflection about violence."

8. "We need a fraternity which has in its midst members who renounce all violence in all of its forms and who promote the progress of our people through actions which are consistent with human rights."

9. (In a letter to the president of Argentina, congratulating him on the invasion of the Malvinas): "In the name of the Evangelical Convention of Baptists of Argentina, which meets in more than 500 places of worship in our country, we greet our President and we express our joy for the giant step which he has taken to affirm our National Sovereignty. . . . In particular we feel very close to all the Christian young men, many of them Evangelicals and Baptists, who will need the help of chaplains, in the lines of conflict, both within the army and the navy. . . ."

10. (Issued in response to the Argentinian involvement in the Malvinas—Falkland Islands): "We are planning a project which will offer to our country a 'service' of equal duration to the 'military service,' which has the alternative of not taking up arms and not receiving military instruction. . . ."

11. "We confirm the need for conversion on the part of the church to a preferential option for the poor, an option aimed at their integral liberation."

Did you pass the test? Were your stereotypes confirmed or shaken up? The point of this exercise is twofold.

First, it is meant to demonstrate the tremendous interest, the variation and the integrity with which the moral and ethical *questions of violence* are being addressed in Latin America today. This issue, which for nearly five centuries has been taken for granted and therefore left dormant, has within the last 20 years erupted into a major point of theological discussion and discernment. The perceived justification of violence arising out of the liberation theology movement (see note #3), has led the more orthodox churches (both Catholic and Evangelical) to an overreaction toward a truly "pacifist" articulation of the issue (see notes 1 and 8). Evidence that they are not really "non-violent" is seen in the reaction of the Baptist churches to the Malvinas crisis (see 9), and in the Pope's Encyclical (see 2).

The fact that the liberation movement does not entirely fit this generalized perception as an advocate of violence (see 4) has as of now not hindered its opponents from (a) denouncing violence as "unevangelical" and (b) issuing statements that are more "evangelical" but that do not really represent the viewpoint of its member constituents (see 8).

However, this does indicate that the church in Latin America is in a state of turmoil and change (see 5, 6) and that this turmoil is leading to some long-term and far-reaching renewal (see 10, 11).

The second point of this exercise is to show that as Anabaptists we should be in the midst of this dialogue. We should learn from their struggle as well as share our vision, which now has survived nearly 500 years of persecution and prosperity. Our presence in Latin America can be influential, especially during these crucial years of defining positions and discerning future directions.

Although I have used only one issue (violence) in this brief article, this pattern exists in virtually all theological and biblical issues. The next quarter of a century will be crucial in the development of doctrine and ethics in Latin America. Our solidarity with them in this struggle can lead to further growth and maturity in the churches of Latin America and can lead to undreamed-of renewal within our North American churches. Let's accept the challenge.

Footnotes and answers.

1. Pope Paul VI, address at Mass on Development Day, Aug. 23, 1968
2. *Populorium Progressio*, Encyclical of Paul VI, March 26, 1967
3. Letter from 900 priests from Latin America at the 2nd Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, Medellín, Colombia, August 1968
4. Dom Hélder Cámara, "Violence in the Modern World," April 25, 1968 (here classified as a liberation theologian)
5. Final document of the 3rd General Conference of the Latin American Catholic Episcopate, Puebla, Mexico, Jan. 27-Feb. 13, 1979, n. 532
6. C. René Padilla, editorial "Beyond 1984," *Misión*, Dec. 11, 1984 (Evangelical theologian)
7. Gustavo Parajón, Baptist pastor, *Misión*, Dec. 7, 1983
8. Los Documentos de CONELA, p. 8 (organization of conservative Evangelical groups)
9. Letter of the Evangelical Baptist Convention of Argentina to the president of Argentina, April 2, 1982
10. Document drawn up by the pastors and workers of the I.E.M.A. (Mennonite Evangelical Church of Argentina), October 1982—shortly after the Malvinas crisis
11. Final document of the 3rd General Conference of the Latin American Catholic Episcopate, Puebla, Mexico, Jan. 27-Feb. 13, 1979, n. 1,134

"Jack" Suderman is pictured here with some of his students at Baptist Theological Seminary, Cochabamba, Bolivia, in 1984. He and his wife, Irene, are taking a leave of absence from the Commission on Overseas Mission while he studies at Toronto School of Theology. Their address is 138 Cornell Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3E6.

"I have been waiting all my life to hear someone say those words. I have been waiting to hear them not only for myself, but for my children and for my grandchildren. Of course I forgive you," said Edith Memnook, an elderly Native from White Fish Lake, Alta., in August for a dozen Native elders from United Church congregations across Canada. She spoke in response to an apology offered by the General Council of the United Church of Canada for the way the church and its missionaries had denied Native spirituality.

Three "fierce dragons" need to be vanquished if Canada is to become a real help to poor countries, says Margaret Catley-Carlson, head of the Canadian International Development Agency. The dragon called "contempt," she told an audience, will tell you that "the Third World is full of apathetic people holding out bottomless begging bowls." The dragon of "skepticism" will claim that "development doesn't work, that progress is impossible." The third dragon is the serpent of self-interest, she said. " 'Charity begins at home,' he will hiss at you."

NEWS

Older congregations encouraged to reach out

Western District Conference charts growth

Wichita, Kan. (GCMC)—Holding fast to the confession of their hope (Hebrews 10:22), 347 delegates from 75 member congregations gathered here Oct. 17-19 from five states: Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. Jake Tilitzky, a pastor from Clearbrook, B.C., and past president of the General Conference Mennonite Church, delivered three addresses, also drawing on Hebrews 10. "We are called to be one with God; that oneness is enfleshed in our relationships with people; and God renews our hope as we look toward fulfillment of that hope."

Hope was indeed in demand as delegates adopted a $347,094 budget (down $20,000 from last year) and admonished the 12 committees to delay any new plans for one year. Cutting $11,000 from its $169,000 slice would not, stated the home missions committee, reduce program but rather reflect phased out subsidies. The district has a 10-year plan of diminishing subsidies for new congregations. Virginia Ratzlaff, Lawrence, Kan., cautioned, "Don't forget those of us who may need to ask for help," describing the typically young and temporary members of churches on university campuses. Marjorie Stucky concurred. "Sixteen people," she said, "will leave our church [in Fort Collins, Colo.] in less than a year."

But Ervey Unruh, pastor from Montezuma, Kan., was full of hope. After building a new church in 1980, the congregation subdivided because some wanted to continue to identify with the General Conference, and that group built again in 1984. "We may not have all the facilities," said Unruh, "but we believe we're going to make it."

Martha F. Graber, North Newton, Kan., encouraged calling forth retired Mennonite builders—people with financial, personal and physical skills. Marilyn Miller, pastor from Boulder, Colo., agreed: "Walter and Meta Gering [a retired pastoral couple] were such a blessing to us."

Also along budget lines, with a voice vote the conference accepted the resolution for the [General Conference] development plan. President Don Schmidt assured the delegates that the 10 Western District projects in the plan, totaling $1,320,600 "had been carefully processed by the council and representatives. Only one delegate came to the microphone. Peter Bartel, Wichita, called for hopeful faith: "I'm not opposed to the development plan, but it is a pretty big bite."

Hopeful resolutions about church planting (15 new congregations in the next 10 years) and evangelism (a 5 percent net increase in worship attendance during the next five years) were also passed. The language "established congregations" was changed to "congregations 10 years and older" in calling for a renewed vision to make evangelism a priority. This change was

WDC
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CONFERENCE
HOLD FAST
TO THE
CONFESSION
OF OUR HOPE

Clockwise from upper left: Western District Conference minister Frank Keller presents a commemorative plaque to B. H. Janzen, celebrating 70 years in church work; (top and bottom) the district's nine committees posed specific questions for discussion groups to answer, and one such group was led by Stan Schrag, assistant pastor at First Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan.; Earl Cater, Inola, Okla., and Adolf Neufeld, Inman, Kan., roll up the long graph that charted population and church membership trends in the district.

Alcohol and the problems it creates on the Indian reservation were among the issues discussed at the American Indian meeting held July 24-28 in Elkhart, Ind. The 75 adults, youth and children attending represented Mennonite work among Creek, Blackfeet, Ojibway, Choctaw, Navajo and Hopi Indians. Eleanor Smiley, wife of pastor Henry Smiley at Black Mountain Mennonite Church, a Navajo congregation, noted that almost every home in their congregation is affected by alcohol-related problems. And there are not area programs to tap into.

The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan has agreed to phase out their request for subsidies from the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church over the next five years. FOMCIT has also decided to double its membership of 1,200 by the year 2000. COM has offered to provide two missionaries and matching grants to help the Taiwanese Mennonite churches in their efforts to plant new churches.

"The Kingdom Chums: Little David's Adventure," a biblical and inspirational special combining live action and animation, will air Friday, Nov. 28 (8-9 p.m., EST), on the ABC Television Network. In the program three children learn the Bible story of David and Goliath with the help of transformed stuffed animals.

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in deference to a couple of new congregations who feel "very established." Tim Lehman, assistant pastor at Eden Church, Moundridge, Kan., pushed for a more hopeful goal: a 5 percent net increase *each* year for five years. David Habegger, the district's church planter, said the resolution writers wanted to be realistic. Adolf Neufeld, Inman, Kan., said that in the past 10 years the 65 "older" congregations showed a loss of 609 members.

"Prayer is the key to growth," Don Schmidt had said in the opening worship, and this was reiterated by several, including Herb Minnich, pastor at the growing Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Church, who added, "prayer followed by signs and wonders."

On the matter of the 15 new churches in 10 years, Don Steelberg, pastor at the Lorraine Avenue Church, Wichita, said, "This resolution doesn't tell us where 15 church planters are to be found. The home missions committee is looking for a certain kind of church planter, and those are in short supply. Moreover, there is no budget. We need a dollar figure." Even so, the district has budgeted $2,000 as starting funds for a new church in Oklahoma.

Walter Neufeld, pastor of the Hanston and Ransom (Kan.) congregations, answered Steelberg. "It's a little like Mennonite Disaster Service. We [the home missions committee] operate in creative chaos." The district's history with church planting points to hope. In 1979 delegates set a goal of 10 new churches in 10 years. Twelve were planted in the next seven years, of which two have discontinued.

Treasurer Norma Wiens, Newton, Kan., announced the First Annual Hope Award: two congregations—Arvada (Colo.) Church and First Church of Clinton, Okla., gave 300 percent of their previous year's contributions to the Western District budget.

Conference minister Frank Keller said he was heartened by the 10 new pastors in the district. One new congregation, in Fort Worth, Texas, was welcomed into membership. "Often," said delegate Brad Bennett, "the peo-

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Central American Mennonites help in Salvadoran earthquake

Akron, Pa. (MCC)—Mennonites from Guatemala drove to San Salvador the day after the Oct. 10 Salvadoran earthquake to see how they could help, reports Mennonite Central Committee representative Blake Ortman (Wichita, Kan.). Ortman requested that MCC provide $40,000 to Guatemala City Mennonites, asking them to purchase zinc roofing and plastic sheeting for temporary housing. Guatemala City Mennonites are shipping these supplies to El Salvador. Another $20,000 is being spent in El Salvador for water storage containers, food, blankets, plastic sheeting, zinc roofing and other emergency supplies.

Victor Martinez of the Casa Horeb Mennonite Church in Guatemala City planned to return to San Salvador with several other Mennonites on Oct. 15 to deliver clothing and supplies collected in their churches. Six to eight relief workers from the Guatemalan and Honduran Mennonite churches plan to travel to El Salvador to join Baptist teams working on earthquake relief. Because of concern from the Mennonite churches in these two neighboring countries, North American volunteers are not needed at this point.

Estimates approaching 1,000 people were killed in the quake and many aftershocks that followed. Another 10,000 were injured and 150,000 left homeless. Especially hard-hit were the shantytowns on the outskirts of the capital. The quake comes in the middle of a devastating six-year war between the U.S.-supported Salvadoran government and rebels. "We have lived two conflicts—the war and now this," one victim said.

The annual Altenfest put on by Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren churches around Coaldale, Alta., was held Sept. 14. It is a thanksgiving festival for those 60 and over, a time for friends to get together, share and have a good time. Bill Thiessen of Linden, Alta., spoke on "getting older, staying young."

Mennonite writers convene in Oregon. Left to right in the foreground (in photo at left) are Lee Dyck, Burns Lake, B.C., Carol Peterson, Aurora, Ore., and Betty Dyck, Penticton, B.C., three of the people who attended an inter-Mennonite West Coast Mennonite Writers' Workshop Oct. 17-19 at Western Mennonite School in Salem. Bernie Wiebe, past editor of *The Mennonite* was a prime mover in organizing the event. About 120 attended, many more than planners expected.

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ple who come to our church are your sons and daughters."

Women in Mission and Mennonite Men conducted separate business, then joined for a supper that featured Frank and Holly Keller's report on their four-month sabbatical in Israel. The men adopted a $7,300 budget, of which $6,000 supplies scholarships for students at Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The women documented cash gifts this year of $119,779.34 and material aid valued at over $72,000. In 1987 they will support evangelism workshops, victim-offender ministries and the new church in Aurora, Colo., pastored by Joan and Leonard Wiebe.

Stewardship will continue to occupy the Western District Conference. Among the questions tested by the three-member coordinating committee as they visit each of the 77 congregations in the coming year is, Should the district employ a fund-raiser? Don Longbottom, Moundridge, Kan., reminded the delegates to "hear the vision of the poor; check our methods of fund-raising with Anabaptist theology." Joe Atherton, pastor at Kingman, Kan., said that when he understood that stewardship was "conserving and utilizing all our gifts, not just money," he was glad to serve on the stewardship committee.

Appropriately, the pastor at a new congregation (Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita), Marvin Zehr, was chosen to be the new president of the district, succeeding Don Schmidt. And an old tune with new words summarized the conference theme: "One member's faith can't give the district hope . . . but if two and two and fifty serve in love, we hold fast to our hope."

The next (96th) session of the Western District Conference will be at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. (then celebrating its centennial) in October 1987. *Muriel T. Stackley*

Africa pushes world Mennonite growth

Lombard, Ill. (MWC)—The 1986 worldwide membership totals for Mennonite and related churches comes to 774,000, according to a world membership summary compiled by the Mennonite World Conference office. This figure marks an increase of just over 6 percent since the last such compilation, made for the *Mennonite World Handbook 1984 Supplement.*

Country-by-country and year-to-year comparisons can sometimes be misleading, due to changes and differences in reporting methods and the fact that in many cases updated figures are not reported every year. However, according to the available data, the largest growth by far over the past two years has been in Africa, where total membership increased from 107,267 in 1984 to 136,930 in the 1986 survey.

Zaire accounts for most of the continent's change, with a current membership in three conferences of 92,583, compared to 66,408 two years ago, an increase of 39.4 percent. Zaire now counts almost 12 percent of all the Mennonites in the world. Another way of putting it: Nearly one of every eight members of Mennonite and related churches today is Zairian. If current trends continue, Zaire could surpass Canada as the second-ranking Mennonite nation by the end of this decade.

Other African nations reporting increases since 1984 include Angola (up to 300 from 192), Burkina Faso (up to 34 from 13), Tanzania (up to 14,441 from 13,616) and Zimbabwe (up to 7,718 from 5,184).

Another region reporting sizable growth was the Caribbean, Central and South America, with an increase of 7 percent, from 76,229 in 1984 to 81,782 in 1986. Increases in many of the small church conferences throughout the region combined for the overall jump. The current listing includes 72 church conferences in 23 nations, by far the most for any region.

Asian churches reported a small gain from 113,554 in 1984 to 114,828 in 1986. North American membership rose by slightly over 2 percent, from 339,991 in 1984 to 347,700. Europe's membership was virtually unchanged—92,693 in 1984 and 92,500 in 1986.

The overall totals reflect a continuing shift in Mennonite population, with churches of the two-thirds world (Africa, Asia, Central and South America) rapidly gaining on the churches of North America and Europe.

In 1984 the North American and European churches comprised 59.3 percent of the total worldwide membership; by 1986 this figure had dropped to 56.9 percent.

In all, the figures include 145 groups or organized bodies in 57 nations, including Mennonites, Brethren in Christ, Amish, Old Order and Old Colony groups, Hutterites and others that identify themselves as in the Anabaptist tradition. Inclusion in the statistical summary does not necessarily imply membership in Mennonite World Conference.

The listings do not include certain recent mission and church outreach efforts where there are baptized believers but no organized church structure as yet.

Added to the statistical summary since 1984 are the Christian Anabaptist Church of Costa Rica, the El Salvador Mennonite Church of Metapan and the Mennonite Brethren Church of Peru.

Among other information gleaned from the summary:

- The six leading Mennonite nations, each with more than 50,000

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Mubarak Awad, a Palestinian psychologist who in 1985 founded the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence in Jerusalem, says his beliefs were influenced primarily by his Greek Orthodox mother. About other influences he says, "I was impressed by the drive of the Mennonites and Quakers to do good, and I was interested in knowing about that drive." In 1969, after being jailed by the Israelis, he left for America and enrolled at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Awad has helped Palestinian villages in several non-violent actions, some of which have included sympathetic Israelis.

Selkirk (Man.) Christian Fellowship celebrated its 20th anniversary Aug. 31. The congregation, first known as Elim Fellowship, started when Meti people asked Native Ministries to provide leadership for a church fellowship. Now the congregation is made up of Cree, Salteaux, German Mennonites, English, Polish and Scotch people as well as Meti. "This fellowship," says Malcolm Wenger, recent pastor, "is a taste of what we read in Revelation 7 about all tribes and tongues and nations coming together."

Triumphant Christian Living services were held Sept. 14-19 at the Pioneer Hall in Freeman, S.D., with J. J. Toews of Clearbrook, B.C., as guest speaker. Toews, who has served in Europe, Canada and the United States in church-related ministries, spoke on the work of the Holy Spirit.

'Sanctity of life' discussed at Bluffton College

Bluffton, Ohio (MCC U.S.)—People passionately committed to what they call "the sanctity of life" gathered for a Consultation on the Sanctity of Life here Sept. 19-20.

Sponsored by Bluffton College, the Committee of Southern Churchmen and Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section, the one-day event attracted 150 people concerned about abortion, capital punishment and the proliferation of nuclear arms.

Ivan Illich, philosopher, teacher and historian, used the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead as told in John 11 as his basis for understanding what life is.

The key words of Jesus to which Illich referred were "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25-26). He challenged listeners to think in terms of "living" rather than "life." He asked, "Why do you protect life and not people?" His challenge caused discussion and disagreement.

Will Campbell, philosopher and writer, added a response to his friend's contribution by saying that there is really no way to name that which is so holy and therefore, for want of a word, referred to it as the great "Wow!"

Illich set the stage for panel discussions. Questions were raised about the use of power and whether and how it should be used to further a cause. There were questions raised about "one issue" as opposed to a "seamless garment" approach to these issues. Questions were raised about methods. Should political action methods be used or should responses to the issues be more personal and less public?

Non-stop discussion reflected the energy and commitment of the participants. If there was hope that this consultation would reveal the total unity of spirit of all those present, it did not succeed. If the consultation was an effort at beginning an ongoing conversation, it succeeded beyond any hope. *Kathy Royer*

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members, are the United States, Canada, Zaire, Indonesia, the Soviet Union and India. An estimated 55,000 Mennonites, counted in four groupings, live in the Soviet Union.

- At the other end of the scale, a total of 25 nations with Mennonite and related groups report memberships of less than 1,000 each. Most of these represent mission work begun in recent decades.
- A growth rate of 6 percent every two years, if sustained into the future, would result in a total Mennonite and related population of 1 million by the year 1996. *David Shelly*

Ezra and Zuki Sigwela and their 2-month-old daughter, Nobulungisa (which means "bearer of justice"), of South Africa are living in Moundridge, Kan., for six weeks as the first participants in Mennonite Central Committee's Servanthood Sabbatical Program. (Three of their children remained in South Africa.) Ezra works with the Transkei Council of Churches in South Africa. Transkei is a "bantustaan," an area in South Africa designated for blacks only, recognized as an independent country by only the South African government.

Ezra has been detained four times by the Transkei security police for his work with South African refugees. He was last detained for four weeks in January. Zuki operates a sewing business out of her home.

In 1987 MCC hopes to bring at least five South African church workers to North America for several weeks to give these workers a retreat from the tensions of their work and to meet North American Mennonites and Brethren in Christ.

The United Church of Canada has for the first time elected a laywoman as its moderator, the highest elective office in the denomination. Anne Squire, 65, won out over six other candidates in recent balloting at a General Council meeting in Sudbury, Ont. She will serve a two-year term as head of the one-million-member church, the largest Protestant denomination in Canada.

Miriam Hurst Harnden began Crossroads, a Mennonite introduction service, early in 1986. Harnden married a Free Methodist 39 years ago and became active in the Free Methodist Church. She was divorced 16 years ago. She looked for a single Mennonite man with compatible interests. She tried a popular introduction service and says, "My experiences were terrible." A brochure telling her service's basic goals is available free from Crossroads, Box 32, North Tonawonda, NY 14120. More than 20 people have already become members.

Plans for Menno Simons College are "three years ahead of my projected schedule," says George Epp, director of the Mennonite Studies Centre at the University of Winnipeg. The program currently offers courses in Mennonite studies and does research in Mennonite history, with the aim of developing into an accredited college. "The university is actually encouraging us to move a little faster than what I had anticipated," Epp told *Mennonite Reporter*. The centre was created in June 1984 through a grant of $750,000 from the David Friesen Family Foundation. The latest addition to the faculty is Bernie Wiebe, former editor of *The Mennonite*.

Job openings

The Commission on Overseas Mission invites interested young people (college-age) to participate in a summer '87 missions service assignment in Colombia, South America.

For further information, please write or call Personnel Secretary, Commission on Overseas Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

Staff writer/editor needed at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters, Akron, Pa.

Contact MCC Personnel Services at 21 S. 12th St., Box M, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151, or 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381.

Year-round resident director team required for spring '87 at Camp Moose Lake, approximately 140 miles southeast of Winnipeg (near Sprague). Couple preferred. Job includes maintenance, food service, hosting of rental groups, camp promotion, outdoor education, involvement in summer camp program, etc. Application deadline is **Jan. 30, 1987**.

For more information, write or call Monica Wiebe at the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, 202-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C9, (204) 477-0873.

Year-round resident-director team required for spring '87 at Camp Koinonia near Boissevain, Man. Couple preferred. Job includes maintenance, food service, hosting of rental groups, camp promotion, outdoor education, involvement in summer camp program, etc. Application deadline is **Dec. 31**.

For more information, write or call:
Monica Wiebe
Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba
202-1483 Pembina Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C9
(204) 477-0873.

workers

Diane Driedger, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, has begun a one-year Mennonite Central Committee Canada term assisting Henry Enns in working with Disabled People's Concerns. Part of her work will involve research and writing in such areas as the disabled self-help movement.

John Dyck and *Arthur Fast* are serving part time in leadership and pastoral duties, respectively, on an interim basis at Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg.

Neil Funk is serving as pastor at Graysville (Man.) Church.

Ted Koontz, assistant professor of ethics at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., has been named director of the Master of Arts in Peace Studies program at the seminaries.

Dave Neufeld, pastor at the Hoffnungsfelder churches of Rabbit Lake, Glenbush and Mayfair for 14 years, began as pastor at the end of August at Ebenfeld Church, Herschel, Sask.

Liz Nickel, Sterling Church, Winnipeg, is administrative secretary in the MCCC overseas department.

Nussbaums

Karla and *Wayne Nussbaum*, First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., have begun three-year MCC terms in Des Chapelles, Haiti. They are working as registered nurses at Hospital Albert Schweitzer. Both received associate degrees in nursing from Hesston (Kan.) College. His parents are George and Viola Nussbaum of Twin Falls, Idaho. Hers are Ardyth and George Steckly of Hutchinson.

Donald Penner is assistant pastor at Niagara United Mennonite Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., as of Aug. 1, contrary to what was reported in the Sept. 23 issue.

James Pike has begun as pastor at Alsen (N.D.) Church, a dual pastorate with the Rose Hill Mennonite Brethren Church.

Wally Regier has resigned from the pastorate at Bethany Church, Virgil, Ont., effective Dec. 31.

Art and *Helen Wiens Rempel* returned to Winnipeg from Taiwan in June, having served as GC missionaries since 1983.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., announces the 1986-87 officers of the board of directors: *Susan Rhoades*, Newton, chair; *John Janzen*, Newton, vice chair; *Wilbert Wiebe*, Whitewater, Kan., secretary; *Alvin Penner*, Newton, treasurer. The board approved an operating budget of $6,380,635 for this fiscal year.

Gary Schapansky began part-time duties as youth worker this summer at Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg.

N. Gerald and *Sara Wenger Shenk*, Reba Place Church, Evanston, Ill., will begin three-year MCC terms in Yugoslavia in January 1987. Gerald will be working as teacher and researcher in religious studies and Sara as a writer. She received a master's degree in theology from Garrett Evangelical Theo-

Rich, developed countries gained $31 billion from the Third World in 1985, according to a United Nations report. The flow of credits, investments and aid from the developed world to Third World countries totaled $36 billion in 1985, the "1986 World Economic Survey" by the UN Economic and Social Council said. But payments from the Third World to developed countries—largely debt interest payments and profits on investments by developed countries—totaled $67 billion. Of the $31 billion margin, $30 billion was from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Palmer Becker, pastor at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C., is the major speaker for Break '86, a churchwide event for young adults in the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. "Dimension of Decision Making" will be the theme discussed Dec. 27-30 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa. Registration, room and board will be $70 for U.S. participants and $80 for those from Canada. Preregistration is requested by Dec. 10. For more information contact COE, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347.

Rainbow Boulevard Mennonite Church in Kansas City, Kan., sends "care packages" to its students and voluntary service workers. Packages contain popcorn, homemade cookies and candy, other munchies and a letter—all to remind absent members that the congregation "has not forgotten them." One recipient responded, "Every time I eat a cookie I think of you."

RECORD

logical Seminary in Evanston, Ill. He received a master's degree in theology from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., and is a doctoral candidate in religious studies at Northwestern University in Evanston. They have two children, Joseph and Timothy. Sara's parents are Chester and Sara Jane Wenger of Lancaster, Pa. Gerald's parents are Norman and Jean Shenk of Mount Joy, Pa.

Tim and *Suanne Sprunger* returned to Hong Kong in June, where they are General Conference missionaries. They are working as church planters, evangelists and leaders in the East Kowloon Mennonite Church.

Nelson Steelberg, First Church, Wadsworth, Ohio, has begun a two-year MCC term in Washington, where he is working part time with two peace groups, the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund and the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors. He received a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Bluffton (Ohio) College. His parents are Donald and Elsie Steelberg of Wichita, Kan.

Tim and *Luzdy Stucky*, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, Tucson, Ariz., began a three-year Mennonite Board of Missions voluntary service term in Tucson, as directors of the home repair program in late June. Shalom Fellowship has a vision for long-term community ministries to help meet local needs. The Stuckys will be involved in research and development work to help prison ministries and ministering to needs of Central American refugees get off the ground. Tim's parents are Gerald and Mary Hope Stucky of Bogotá, Colombia. Hers are Libardo and Laura Rodriguez of New York.

Jack Suderman, Kitchener, Ont., will participate in an interchurch delegation to Cuba this month as a representative of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and MCC. This visit is being coordinated by the Canadian Council of Churches.

Louise Swan, Bethesda Church, Henderson, Neb., has begun a three-month MCC term in SELFHELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa.

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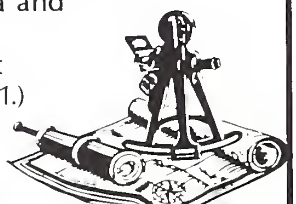

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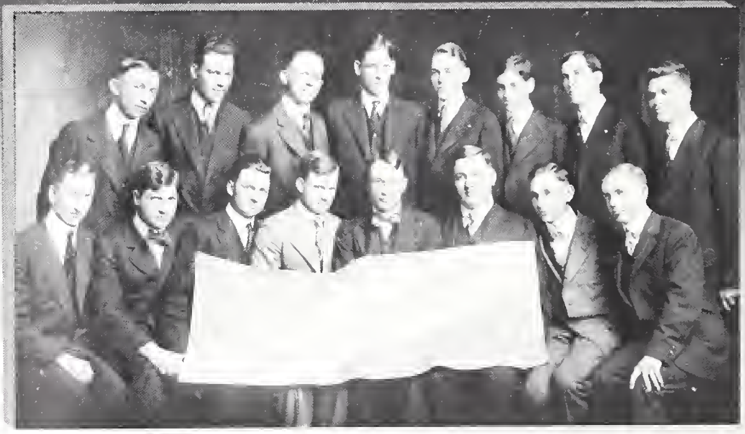

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"Group Venture really brought our youth group closer together. We got to know a lot of new people and learned to know each other a lot better too. We were shown that money isn't everything. People do have fun without a lot of money and they don't worry about it."

—Group Venture participant

"A valuable thing was actually meeting a person that didn't have a home. It was the first time that I met someone like that."

—Youth Venture participant

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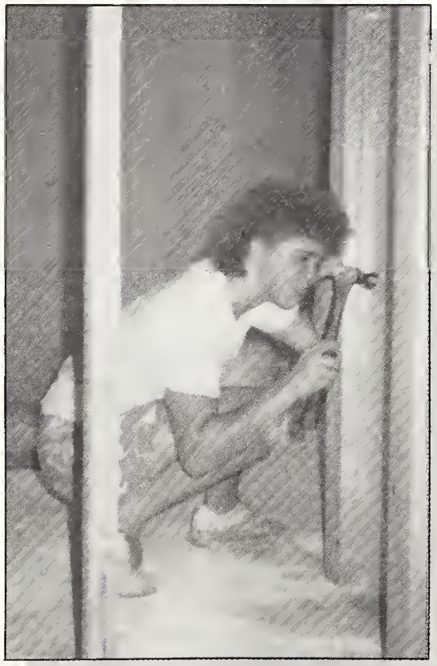

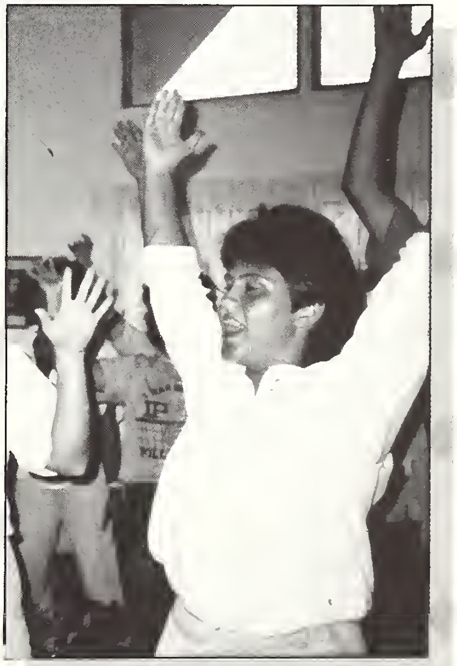

Youth Venture • Group Venture

“After all . . . why are we here?”

Leona Kropf, Sweet Home, Oregon, has spent her life with children. A teacher, she worked for years with Indians in Arizona and Canada. “I've seen so many children needing good homes,” she says. “I wanted to adopt . . . but would an agency take a single woman's request seriously?”

Last year, she acted on her wish. With the help of PLAN (Plan Loving Adoptions Now), within a year she stood in Portland International Airport holding Caleb Ray Vijay Kropf, a four-month-old baby from Calcutta, India.

Her family and her church, Fairview Mennonite, supported her through all the steps of her decision. But there still were bills of over $5,000 to pay. “I'm willing to save and give up a lot to help this child,” Leona says. “After all, why are we here? **If I can't go to the mission field in India, I'll bring the mission field to me.**”

To help with her expenses, Mennonite Mutual Aid gave Leona an Adoption Expense grant. Now she'd like to adopt another child . . . to raise two together.

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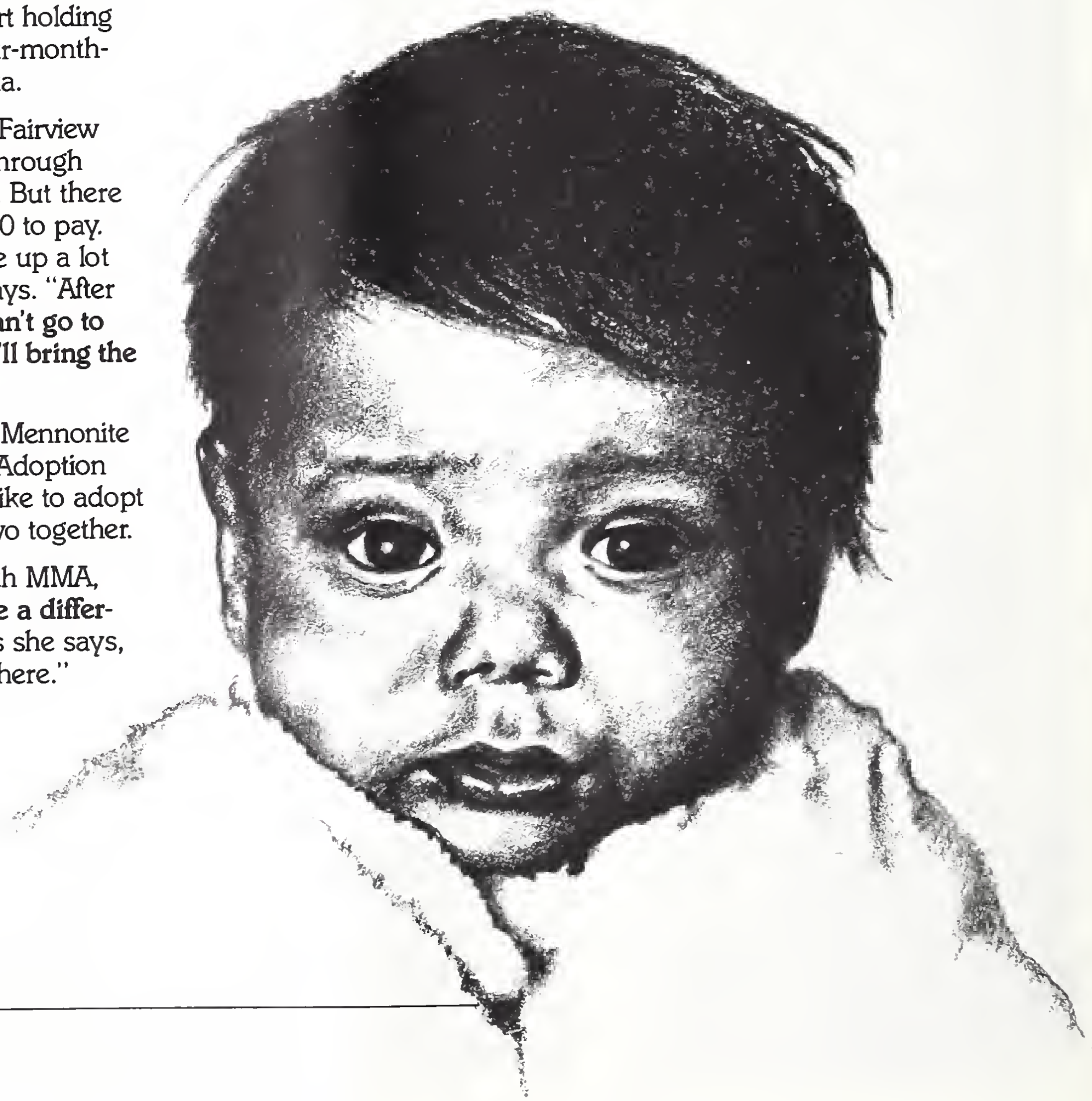

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Illustration by Nick Antonakis

LETTERS

Cautions hymnal revision

In the letter with the title "Emphasize Jesus" (Sept. 23 issue) the writer states, "Jesus Christ's blood was shed, and he was crucified on a cross, but . . . it is not the blood on the cross as some hymns say" (Ephesians 2:13, Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:7).

Is that clear now? There are numerous other Scriptures to verify this. . . . Songs like "Nothing but the Blood of Jesus," "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood," "Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb" and numerous others like it proclaim the true gospel of salvation. . . .

A hymnbook revision? Already, when the ones now in use still even "smell new"? . . . When the time actually does come for a new hymnbook—when the old ones begin to look shabby—hopefully it will be only a revision of the book and not of the hymns. *C. B. Friesen, 415 E. First St., Newton, KS 67114*

Sept. 23

Seduced by alcohol

Willard Krabill has a firm grasp of the truth and an effective way of proclaiming it. But at the risk of being branded "divisive" and "narrowminded," I must ask if the General Conference has no person who is equally erudite and articulate of this subject? To my chagrin, no name comes to mind, but I would be happy to be enlightened.

To follow Krabill's advice prevents many problems and causes none. I can speak to that from personal experience. *Lawrence Zuercher, 654 N. Grant St., Wooster, OH 44691-2823*

Sept. 29

A long-standing issue

It is with much distress that I read many of the letters published recently regarding the resolution on human sexuality and the art form of Christ as a woman. Both extreme viewpoints seem to represent a "snake in the garden" approach to theology or "Christian ideals." I'm sure that after the Jerusalem conference on circumcision there were many similar responses by those on both sides of the issue. Issues about sexuality or sexual behavior seem to often reveal our own blind spots. Vernard Eller at the Estes Park (Colo.) conference of the Mennonite Medical/Nurses Association in July gave a compassionate plea in the form of facing the "snake in our own garden" first before pronouncing judgment on each other. Christ demonstrated this consistently. We must learn from Jesus' teaching of love, compassion and forgiveness. We must pray fervently for each other regardless of our brother or sister's level of understanding and way of life. I learn so much from even the newer/youngest child of God. I attended the Saskatoon conference and learned much from the daily Bible studies, Hubert Brown's and Myron Augsburger's and other presentations. The resolution on human sexuality was an issue but not the main one. It represented a willingness on the part of many people concerned to work toward an understanding of a long-standing issue. *John Bergey, 4024 E. Huntington, Fresno, CA 93702*

Oct. 2

On the subject of eunuchs

I was paging through my concordance this morning when I ran across this passage from Matthew 19:11-12: "Jesus replied, 'Not everyone can accept this teaching, but only those to whom it has been given. For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.' " I do not believe Jesus' reply signaled the rejection of those who cannot accept it. (See also Isaiah 56:4-5) *Larry Lakin, 110 Michigan #91, Lawrence, KS 66044*

Oct. 8

Offensive cover

Upon reading the Sept. 23 issue of *The Mennonite* I was taken aback by the front cover. The excellent article entitled "Seduced by Alcohol" was not what bothered me. It was the illustration that I found offensive. The picture of a beautiful woman offering a tray of drinks does not do the article justice. The written selection, if I understand it correctly, is speaking of the way in which we are seduced into believing all sorts of false information about alcohol. The author does mention sexual seduction briefly, but only in how that type of persuasion is similar to that of alcohol. The illustration, however, is playing upon a misconception that women are primary seducers, that if you take this drink, the woman made you do it. I find that demeaning as a woman and an individual who appreciates the impact of visual images.

The intention of the article seems to have been to point out the way in which we are allowing ourselves to be manipulated by alcohol and its proponents, not how a woman can make you drink. Advertising frequently uses the sex ploy in an attempt to promote use of alcohol. I find that offensive too. Yet, in relationship to this article, the accompanying image does not point the finger where it was intended. Any responses to this issue would be appreciated. *Valerie Wiebe, Box 257, Langham, SK S0K 2L0*

Oct. 14

The Mennonite on cassette, yes

Our congregation will not be participating in the trial project of *The Mennonite* on cassette tape. We have no one in our congregation at this time who would be a likely user. We do, however, want to offer our encouragement in attempting this project. I know from a study done through my office, Developmental Disability Services, several years ago that there is a need for such a service. We are doing almost nothing for our blind and visually impaired members in the church. I hope the pilot project goes well and that you will be able to continue it after December. *Dean Preheim-Bartel, Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, 800 E. Hively, Elkhart, IN 46517*

Oct. 15

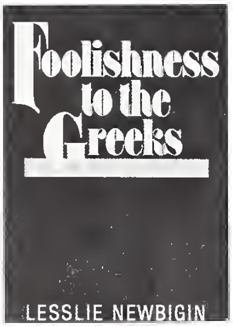
Editor's note: For information about The Mennonite *on cassette, write to Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Consider giving a Christmas gift to the visually impaired person in your life. Congregations may want to order a tape.*

About letters: *To encourage readers to express themselves on a variety of issues, we try to use all letters submitted for publication. Longer letters will be shortened. Unsigned correspondence will not be published, although we may withhold names for valid reasons in special situations. All correspondence to* The Mennonite *should be addressed to Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.* Editor

Gospel and culture

Foolishness to the Greeks *by Lesslie Newbigin, (Eerdmans, 1986, 176 pages)*

Reviewed by Erwin Rempel, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114



For the past 200 years missionary activity has generally been a one-way street: from the West to the two-thirds world. Considerable effort has been made to contextualize the gospel among all the world's cultures. It is now time to revise this one-directional approach and develop a missionary encounter with modern Western culture.

Lesslie Newbigin, a former missionary with 38 years of experience in India, poses the key question in this revision of missionary activity: "As people who are part of modern Western culture, with its confidence in the validity of its scientific methods, how can we move from the place where we explain the gospel in terms of our modern scientific worldview to the place where we explain our modern scientific worldview from the point of view of the gospel?"

Newbigin then asks what would be involved in such a missionary encounter with modern Western culture and develops his argument in six chapters by (1) looking in general at the issues raised by cross-cultural communication of the gospel; (2) examining the essential features of our modern Western culture, including the present signs of its disintegration; (3) examining the crucial question of how biblical authority can be a reality for those who are shaped by modern Western culture; (4) suggesting what would be involved in the encounter of the gospel with our culture in respect to the intellectual core, namely science; (5) asking the same question about politics; and (6) suggesting the tasks to be implemented by the church in bringing about this encounter.

I would highly recommend this book for all church leaders, college and seminary students. It represents a needed corrective to the arrogant confidence of post-Enlightenment culture, which excludes any word from God which does not conform to the modern scientific worldview.

Gospel tracts for today

Letters to American Christians *by John K. Stoner (Herald Press, 1986)*

Reviewed by David Groh, 216 E. Adams St., Millersburg, OH 44654

John K. Stoner, executive secretary of the U.S. Peace Section of Mennonite Central Committee, has written seven "Letters" on the issue of peace and justice to American Christians. To many the language will sound familiar, but the message may seem strange.

We all know that "Jesus saves" from our sins. Does he also save from our national enemies, as Stoner claims in Letter 1? Does Jesus "indeed challenge us to rethink our ideas of national security and what it means to be saved"? Or who would guess that those who trust in deadly armaments to defend themselves are guilty of "secular humanism" (p. 9)?

Stoner says, "The story of Jesus Christ places an event of universal disarmament at the center of world history" (Letter 2). The way Jesus faced his enemies provides an alternative to the power of death. He calls upon his disciples to "love your enemies."

Stoner stands for justice but is critical of people on both left and right who use force to achieve it (Letter 3). He insists that our passion for justice needs to be linked to prayer, as it was with Jesus.

Being "born again" is a popular phrase, but what does it mean? In Letter 4 Stoner calls for "conversion to the kingdom of God." In the Sermon on the Mount he sees the standards for a born-again humanity. Stoner claims that much popular evangelism calls "for so little repentance (change) and only a partial rebirth" (p. 10).

According to Stoner, much popular evangelism "has turned the good news into bad news" (Letter 6, p. 3). He outlines six ingredients of a "Peace Church Evangelism."

Stoner sees ecology as a Christian concern. He decries "that the church, far from calling for a harmonious relationship with creation, has undermined and even denied that humankind lives in any necessary relationship at all with creation. . . . The Bible knows nothing of a right relationship with God that does not include a right relationship with creation" (Letter 7, p. 5). Some evangelism has put so much emphasis on the future life that it has demeaned our walk with God on earth.

These 12-page tracts are designed to fit into a number 10 envelope. They could be used for special mailings or included as an extra with normal correspondence. In our congregations they would be valuable for Sunday school or small-group discussion. The cost is $1.95 plus postage per set. There are quantity prices for single titles. *Reprinted from* The Ohio Evangel

Peace church pacifism

Biblical Pacifism: A Peace Church Perspective *by Dale W. Brown (Brethren Press, 1986, 176 pages)*

Reviewed by John Howard Yoder, Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556

The senior peace theologian of the Church of the Brethren here provides an excellent introduction to "peace church" pacifism. It may serve well as a study guide for Brethren or Mennonite members or as an information source for inquirers. Brown is very aware of the ways in which peace church self-understandings have been troubled by internal clashes: passivity versus activism; pietism versus Anabaptism, "peace" versus "justice," enemy love versus effective non-violent struggle. He disarms these polarities by discerning the values in each perspective while leading past the dilemma to resolution, sometimes more pluralistic, sometimes more decisive. His position is decidedly Christian but open to non-Christian pacifist insights, deeply rooted in his own communion yet ecumenical.

The "biblical" chapters of the book are not exegetical with reference to many specific texts, except in the chapter on the "Powers." The treatment is thematic, as is proper on this introductory level. The historical background descriptions of how Brethren and Mennonites have developed and implemented their pacifist stances are enriched with recent church documents.

The eight chapters are not provided with leading questions for group study use, but the level, style and scope would be excellent for that purpose.

MEDITATION

Who am I most like?

Don Boschman

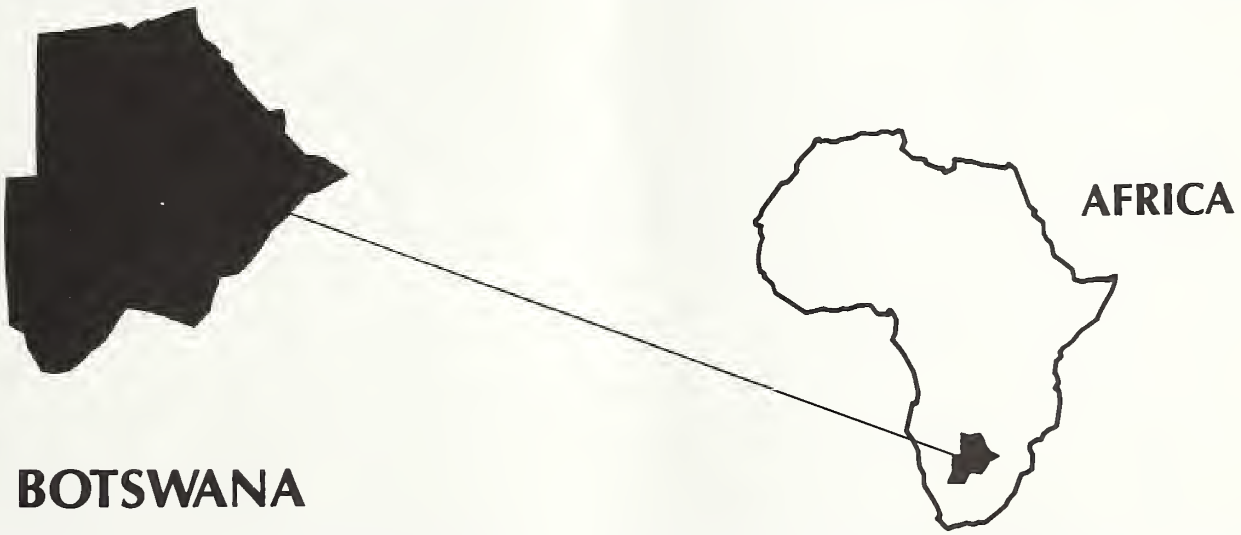
But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin" John 8:1-11 (NIV).



I asked myself recently, "Who am I most like? Am I like the woman caught in adultery or am I like the Pharisees?"

Initially I was tempted to identify myself with the woman who was caught in adultery. After all, even though she had certainly sinned often (Jesus refers to her life of sin), she was the one who received Jesus' gracious judgment: "Then neither do I condemn you." So, I decided, I'll be the woman caught in adultery. After all, who wants to be a Pharisee?

But on second thought there are several attractive reasons for identifying myself with the Pharisees. For example, the Pharisees took their faith seriously and were strongly concerned with ethics. They had a history of sticking to their faith even through the most violent persecutions. They were devout. Thus, after a second glance, I decided I would rather be a Pharisee.

But if I was a Pharisee, who was my counterpart? The woman caught in adultery? In my situation in Southern Africa one suggestion immediately came to mind: the ruling minority in South Africa. Like the sins of the woman caught in adultery, the sins of South Africa's rulers are both continual and obvious.

As I thought about the parallels between this story and my situation, I realized that just as the Pharisees despised and condemned the woman they had caught in adultery, I had found it sinfully easy to become prejudiced against certain groups in Southern Africa. After all, I reasoned, their behavior is exactly opposite of what Christianity teaches. Don't I have a right to condemn them?

Jesus' words to the Pharisee struck home to me: "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Jesus didn't ask the Pharisees to condone or even forget what the woman had done. But he did make them realize that they were in the same moral boat as the woman they despised so much. I often forget that.

Don Boschman (Box 33, Gaborone, Botswana) is a Bible teacher for the African Independent Churches. The Commission on Overseas Mission works there under the auspices of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

EDITORIAL

COM around the world

Take a break from your newspaper, from following Canada's 33rd parliament and the post-election analyses in the United States. Come with me on a global missions award-giving tour. We are concentrating on *overseas* mission (from our point of view).

I'm exercising my editorial freedom to celebrate some people related to our Commission on Overseas Mission, and I submit three categories: families, full circles and first generation. Let these stories remind you of some that you know about and of some people you would like to celebrate and thank God for.

I have three family awards to give. The first is in memory of Marie Funk Bartel. Originally from Hillsboro, Kan., Mrs. Bartel spent most of her adult life in Drake, Sask. Down through the years she hosted innumerable missionaries and (say her children David and Mildred Bartel Schroeder) "was totally informed about General Conference missions." But there were somber, testing moments in store for Mrs. Bartel. Came the day her daughter Lois Bartel Dyck said that she and her husband, Paul, had accepted a call to be missionaries in India. Did a life-long devotion to missions include long separations from her own daughter? That first farewell called forth a whole new aspect to Mrs. Bartel's commitment to overseas missions. Would she ever see her daughter again? She didn't—in this life—after Lois and Paul left for their second term of service.

The second family award honors the descendants of Peter and Maria Lugibihl Burkhalter of Berne, Ind. Among Maria and Peter's 11 offspring were Menno, who begat Edward (missionary to India, 1947 to the present), who begat Mary Kay Larson (missionary to Botswana, 1981 to the present); Susanna, who begat Peter Sprunger, who begat Kenyon, who begat Suanne (missionary to Hong Kong, 1981 to the present); Martha and Noah (missionaries to India, 1917-1959 and 1919-1920). Historian Naomi Lehman says, "Six of Maria and Peter's daughters had no children, or there would be more to report."

The third family award goes to Peter and Mary Derksen, missionaries to Japan, 1954 to the present. Their son Bill is also a missionary in Japan (1983 to the present), son Richard is a missionary in Zaire (1976 to the present) and daughter Wanda Derksen Bergen is a former Overseas Mission Volunteer.

The full circle award goes to Dorothy and Jake Giesbrecht in Clearbrook, B.C. After working for COM (India, 1951-1977) the Giesbrechts are now helping the British Columbia home missions committee host the 150,000 or so who are moving into their area from East Asia. Estimates are that the newcomers now own five out of six farms in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia. "We're living in a changing Canada," says Dorothy, "and we have the privilege of being the host." Jake adds, "The mission field we once went to has now come to our door."

The Giesbrechts participate in making personal contacts as people move into the neighborhood; initiating, nurturing and coordinating fellowship groups; matching English-language tutors and students; and ministering to East Asian prison inmates. When I visited with Dorothy and Jake last February they reported some definite conversions to Christianity in the Sikh community but a hesitancy on the part of the Sikhs to accept baptism.

The first-generation award goes to Larry Hills, missionary in the Transkei, 1982 to the present. Larry became a Christian at age 28. A first-generation Mennonite, Larry came to Mennonite Biblical Seminary in 1980 and two years later accepted an assignment as a Bible teacher with the Transkei Council of Churches in Southern Africa. He participates in Bible seminars in the rural areas, where four or five congregations come together for an event; weekly Bible conferences in Umtata, for which attendance is growing; all-night worship services, including baptisms, and the translation of Mennonite study materials (*The Way of Faith* and *Guide to Peace*) into Xhosa, the language of Transkei. The quest for a ministry of wholeness includes providing low-cost seeds and fruit trees whenever there is a conference.

I thank God for these ordinary/extraordinary people in our midst. We support 146 overseas missionaries in 17 countries. As we understand and accept who we are as a people, as a conference of 364 congregations, we will increasingly and unself-consciously go to the world with the good news of God's salvation. *mts*

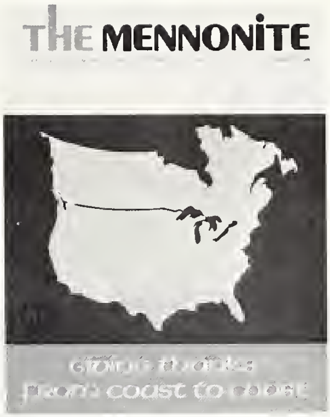
THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:22 NOVEMBER 25, 1986

DEC 1 '86

Giving thanks from coast to coast



Reminding us of "This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine," the 364 congregations of the General Conference reach the length of the land.

prologue

Perhaps you have noticed that *The Mennonite* alternates year by year between October and November for Thanksgiving. Last year we marked Canadian Thanksgiving in October and will again next year.

To help us focus I asked provincial and district presidents/moderators of our conference to tell us their reasons for gratitude. The 10 of them responded, and their words make the long lead article. I'm sure that as they read each other's testimonies they will think, "I could have said that too." Together they give us a picture of what is happening in our conference, and in all things we give thanks.

Further into this issue you will find Maria Siemens Matty's wrestlings with lifestyle. As a postscript she writes, "When I first wrote this article, we had few choices. We asked ourselves whether our lifestyle was determined by how much money we made. What about when money is no longer the controlling factor? Sometimes I think I avoid facing difficult choices by limiting my income. My prayers are with those who have more responsibilities and more difficult choices to make. I especially think of those who have the ways and means to carry out the $17.5 million development plan adopted at the Saskatoon '86 triennial conference. . . . Let us hold each other accountable."

I second that. *mts*

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Credits: Cover, Innovative Communications; 512, Terry Burkhalter; 513, Larry Cornies; 515, Bernie Wiebe; 516, Deb Detweiler; 518, Sara Regier, (top) Joel Kauffmann; 519, Jim Bishop; 521, Steve Shenk.

THE MENNONITE

Editorial offices:
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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, OH 45817; Pacific District, Carol Peterson, 25956 S. Rhoten Road, Aurora, OR 97002; Western District, Debbie Huxman, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; Window to Mission, Lois Deckert, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Richard A. Kauffman, 3003 Benham Ave. Elkhart, IN 46517.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

Coast-to-coast thanksgiving for us means from the Eastern District Conference to the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia, from Thompson, Manitoba, to Houston, Texas. Here are the words of the 10 regional presidents.

Lord of all to thee we raise...

A faithful people

The one thing I am most grateful for is the dedication and faithfulness of so many of our people in our churches in the Northern District Conference, those that live out their faith day by day in word and deed. It is the faithfulness of these people that the Northern District Conference is all about, plus those that have special talents and are willing to serve on the various committees with creative ideas and visions that builds God's kingdom among us.

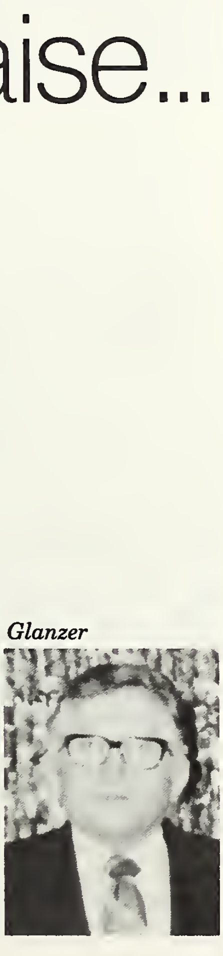
I have deep gratitude for Swan Lake Christian Camp, for the dedication of Denise and Elton Nickel and the leadership they are giving to the camp. Many young people make a commitment to Jesus Christ and to the lordship of Christ in Christian service. What a positive influence our camp is.

I am also thankful for those who are willing to evangelize and get involved in church planting. What dedication and commitment to serve in this area. It takes special people to venture out by faith to serve God as a church planter. Our prayers go with them.

I think that all of us in the Northern District Conference have been blessed by our conference paper, *The Northern Light.* I am grateful to Sieglinda Preheim, who has been the editor for so many years.

There are many other things I could mention in gratitude, but let me mention just one more. I am grateful to my district for the confidence they have placed in me by allowing me to serve as moderator for the past 3½ years. I have received so much more than I could ever give. New horizons have been opened to me, and I have grown in my spiritual pilgrimage. I thank God for the Northern District Conference. *Aaron Glanzer*

Glanzer



Heroes of faith

Where I sit here in Guelph, Ont., it is difficult to think of being grateful in the abstract. My mind immediately leaps to congregations or members who embody the many things for which we can all be thankful.

The danger in doing this, however, is that certain people are singled out, but this is not the intent. I trust these members will be seen as representing the many others who faithfully carry out their ministry and witness in Ontario. Among many other things that I thank God for are these people:

Eleanor Dick in Hamilton, who represents Sunday school teachers who have faithfully taught our children over many years;

Herb Enns, as one of the older generation who has shown a continuing interest in the work of the church;

Bill Toews, who taught at United Mennonite Educational Institute for many years and influenced many of our young people and prepared them for church work and other aspects of life;

Mary Goerzen at Harrow, who has been active as a young person in the work of the conference;

Peter Isaak and Ed Schellenberg, who have spent countless hours on Silver Lake camping matters;

Wally Regier, Doreen Neufeld and Jake Fransen, who represent the many who have served on various conference committees;

Anne Huebert and Edna Mensch, who have worked faithfully with women's groups in the province;

Rudy Wiens and Gerhard Thiessen, who have had a special ministry in our homes for the aged;

John Rempel from Niagara, who has carried on the tradition of good choral singing in our churches;

Klassen

Martin

Camping is an important ministry in the provinces and districts.

Henry Winter, as one of the faithful ministers who has cared for congregations through difficult times;

Grace Church, for its special care for the lonely and the way their needs could be met by volunteers;

Cornie Driedger and his vision for missions;

John Enns from Reesor, who until his recent death preserved part of our heritage in the north;

Bill Dick and his concern for the personal counseling needs of members and the establishment of Shalom Counseling Services;

H. P. Epp and his fostering the feeling of belonging to the wider Mennonite family;

Winfred Soong and the ministry to newcomers to our province;

Peter Wiens in Ottawa, who saw the need for a Mennonite presence in our capital city.

These are not our only heroes of the faith. This is only the beginning of a long list of people and things for which I thank God. Just as in Hebrews 11 there are the many others whom we do not know by name, so in Ontario there are countless others who have quietly and effectively carried out their ministry. I thank God for each one. *Ed Janzen*

In the midst of hardship

The people of Alberta have received many blessings, not always as was hoped for, but God's presence is always felt.

Although Alberta is not recovering financially as quickly as some of our neighboring provinces, there is still room for us as a people to give thanks.

Unemployment is at a record high in our province. Businesses have gone bankrupt. Farm families have been forced into receivership or are at the verge of foreclosure. It has been a difficult year for many of our people. In some circumstances, families and friends have been drawn closer together. Others are trying desperately to cope with each situation. Some churches tried and are assisting in counseling those in stress, trying to help the individual or families. In the Lethbridge area, the church is assisting other churches in sponsoring the soup kitchen.

The weather has not been the most pleasant and cooperative with the farmers this fall. Frost and rain deteriorated much of the crops. However, due to nice weather in the latter part of October, most farmers have completed their harvest.

In the southern part of the province where I live, the sugar beet industry is back in full swing after a year of absence. This has helped tremendously in our community in that it stabilized the economy and helped create more employment. This assisted the farm families and businesses dependent on agriculture.

On Oct. 8 the Saskatchewan and Alberta conferences met to review our Bible school at Swift Current, Sask. The response was positive; people renewed their faith in the Bible school and asked for continuation of the school for the present time. The debt-retirement plan was approved, and it was decided to liquidate it within one year, using the block system of 800 $500 pledges, which will be called in when the full amount of $400,000 has been achieved.

In the city of Edmonton the new church that was started a few years ago has now moved into a new place of worship. The building was dedicated to the Lord Oct. 19.

The Chinese church in Calgary is also looking into purchasing a place of worship. This is exciting news.

This past summer the Springridge Mennonite Church installed four lay people to assist in the services. Calgary Foothills Church also installed a new pastor, who came to them from Camrose. However, this creates vacancies in other churches, thus we are looking for ministers. But we are thankful for the number of people willing to serve their congregation in the meantime as lay ministers.

Some programs within the conference have not materialized, but others again seem to pick up. Our young people are excited about the coming year with new integrity and vision. Their new executive has been elected for 1987 and they are preparing for the coming winter programs. Great Trek 3 has been finalized and will take off in December. Our annual Songfest, which had to be canceled last year, is again coming into motion with renewed enthusiasm.

We are grateful and thankful for the peace and freedom that we have in our country, that we can exercise our ideas and have the privilege to share our faith, not only among our people but with those that surround us. In all, God has been gracious to us. We continue to seek God's will.

Thank-you, Lord Jesus, for all your blessings. I pray that your blessings will continue to flow for all people. *Don Klassen*

Announcing a new ministry

In September the Eastern District Conference announced with thanksgiving that a full-time staff person had begun a ministry in Philadelphia. Louis Naraja is working with Spanish-speaking people in that city and is assuming responsibility for church planting.

We in the Eastern District are grateful for the resolution on sexuality that the General Conference adopted at the Saskatoon '86 triennial session. We consider this a biblical position that lends courage and support to local churches in dealing with this issue. Our district conference has a counseling service for homosexuals.

We are thankful for the development plan for several reasons. We appreciate the willingness of leaders to think about and attempt and expect big things. This sets an example for the Eastern District to do likewise.

The development plan will allow us

Television 12

The vision of Comunidad de Fe, detailed in the section on Central District, includes use of mass media.

Rempel

D. Schmidt

as a district to speak to financial needs that couldn't otherwise be addressed. Some examples are the various scholarship funds for students; making Anabaptist-oriented seminary-credit courses available to pastors in our district, allowing us to cooperate locally with the Mennonite Church in a seminary outpost program; funding of a central records-storage area and a staff person for the district; support for church planting. We are also particularly interested in overseas projects in which missionaries from our district will be working.

We are also grateful for dedicated Christian leaders in the General Conference. J. W. Sprunger's time with us in 1985—both at our annual sessions and in visiting congregations—resulted in a positive and wholesome attitude to the General Conference's education program and to the Foundation Series curriculum in particular.

Finally, we are grateful for C. J. Dyck coming to us for nearly a week this fall for a much-appreciated series on Anabaptist history and culture. We ministers and our spouses thank the Mennonite Biblical Seminary faculty for this experience, for their willingness to continue to extend themselves beyond the seminary walls. *J. Leon Martin*

Roll call for believers

My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to God (Psalm 28). Basic to our thankfulness here in British Columbia is the strength and the presence of our 27 congregations. The 27th is the Laotian church that meets on the premises and under the "umbrella" of the Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church. Sylang and Lorne Kaneboodtra have been the faithful pastoral couple. We are thankful for Jake and Dorothy Giesbrecht's ministry to the Sikh community, for Daniel and Susan Cheung's faithful ministry to the Chinese, and for Stephen and Sally Lee's ministries in that same Chinese work. (Stephen Lee has switched his base of operation to the provincial Mennonite Brethren Conference.)

There's a new upswing in the Church of the Way, Granisle. This mining community has been severely affected by a difficult time for that industry, but new life and growth is much in evidence in Granisle.

At Emmanual Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, Dave and Loretta Ortis are new and were ordained in September. We praise God for their willingness to come and serve in pastoral ministry.

What a delight to have David and Dianne Ruby pastoring the Flatrock Church in Cecil Lake, that far-north congregation of 38 members.

We rejoice that Edwin and Tina Giesbrecht responded to the call of the Mennonite Church of Vernon. Excitement and new life in Christ plus additions to the church are already in evidence.

John and Dorothy Unrau are the most recent pastoral couple in our conference, and we welcome them and wish them God's richest blessings. They are at United Mennonite Church in Yarrow.

I should list thankfully the congregational chairpersons, the Sunday school superintendents, the youth leaders, the treasurers, the choir directors, the librarians. All of these plus many, many thousands make up the faithful ministers for Christ in our congregations. Our overall membership in British Columbia stands at 4,645.

We are deeply grateful for the effective outreach ministry of our provincial camp, Camp Squeah ("place of refuge" in the Salish Indian dialect), managed by Peter and Hilda Wiebe. Attendance during the summer weeks was 756 children, compared with 638 in 1985. Of these, at least 160 were from non-church background. We had a significant number of first-time decisions for Christ. Many baptismal candidates speak of the encounters with Christ they had at Camp Squeah.

Columbia Bible College is another important reason to give thanks. The Mennonite Brethren and General Conference Mennonite Church conferences of British Columbia own this property jointly. Of the 160 full-time students, 59 are from our conference. We are thankful for Wally Unger, able and dedicated president of CBC. George Groening, former pastor at Eden Mennonite Church, is chairman of the board.

Menno Simons Centre, located close to the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, is a significant development. Spearheaded sacrificially by Evan and Janice Kreider (he is a UBC professor of music), this is now a reality: accommodation for students and a worshiping center for Mennonites living in the area.

When I stop to think of what we as individuals and conferences do for the glory of God and his kingdom, I am awed and grateful that I can be a small part of it. *Dick Rempel*

A new dedication to growth

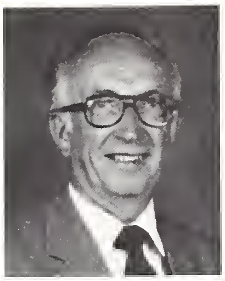
Here are some things for which we in the Western District Conference are thankful:

This fall the new work in Denver has begun with Len and Joan Wiebe.

Hope Church, Wichita, Kan., is continuing to grow, with attendance in the 70-85 range. Members have leased their own facilities at 10300 W. Maple in west Wichita.

On Oct. 7 the first in a series of six teleconferences was held for our pastors. Fred Loganbill led us on the subject of "conflict resolution training for pastors." This is a timely subject on which to gain a better understanding.

During Western District Conference sessions in Wichita we passed a resolution encouraging our churches 10 years and older to make evangelism a priority in the program of the WDC over the next five years. We set a goal of adding 15 new congregations to the conference in the next 10 years. The WDC affirms the goals and plans for the development plan as outlined in the resolution adopted at the General Conference sessions in Saskatoon.



I. Schmidt

V. Schmidt

Wenger

Wiebe

Our district's council of representatives and staff had a retreat at Camp Mennoscah Nov. 14-15. The purpose was to become acquainted, share God's Word, share dreams and visions and begin implementing program for the new year. Pray for us, that the Holy Spirit will lead us. *Don Schmidt, past president*

A testimony of thanksgiving

The 46 churches in our Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan are especially grateful to God and the General Conference executive this year for giving us the opportunity to host the triennial sessions in Saskatoon last July. We will reap benefits for many years because we could witness firsthand the process of decision making and the moving worship services. We became acquainted with so many sisters and brothers in the General Conference as well as the renewing of old friendships.

Saskatchewan is privileged to have a successful camping program at three locations. The diversity of camp environment and emphasis makes it possible for parents to choose a camp most suited to their needs, and for this we are thankful.

Together with our neighboring conference in Alberta we operate two church schools: Rosthern Junior College, meeting the needs of our young people at the high school level, and Swift Current Bible Institute at the Bible school level. Although there are concerns about low enrollment this year, we are grateful for constituency support. A joint meeting in October to discuss the future of SCBI was encouraging. Delegates supported an all-out effort to eliminate a large capital debt.

The varied program of our conference includes the work of the missions committee as they undergird a new Chinese Mennonite Church in Saskatoon and a Native outreach program in the same city. They continually look for opportunities to start a church planting project and supervise a chaplaincy program in the Saskatoon hospitals.

To the education committee falls the task of conducting a variety of church-related workshops and giving leadership to the Saskatchewan Mennonite Youth Organization.

The service committee helps us reach out into prison ministries, nursing homes and home-care services.

We are thankful to have Henry Funk as our conference minister to meet the spiritual needs of our pastors. This year he has participated in a number of installations and ordinations and for these and all the other blessings we receive from our heavenly Father we are truly thankful. *Irvin V. Schmidt*

Looking toward inter-Mennonite work

We in the Central District Conference have a list of 14 things we are grateful for this year.

Nine new churches have been started within the last three years.

We thank God for each pastor who is serving in our 61 congregations.

We anticipate with thanksgiving the first-ever joint conference with the Indiana/Michigan Conference of the Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., in 1987.

We are excited about Comunidad de Fe, a Spanish-speaking congregation in Chicago under the leadership of Marco Guete. Marco has a vision to reach 2,000 people over the next three years through personal discipleship, TV spots (as a minority group they get some free time) and through mass evangelism.

I am grateful for our excellent conference staff: Mark Weidner, Conrad Wetzel, Gary Martin, Eileen Kehler, Jerry Nussbaum, Steve Ropp and Evelyn Krehbiel, for the capable staff at Camp Friedenswald and for the strong financial support of the district for our ministries.

We gratefully announce that three established congregations have new vision for church planting in cities near them.

I am particularly thankful for our many committee members who give freely of their time to see Central District Conference ministries go forward.

Six of our congregations need larger facilities because of recent growth. We thank God. Chicago Mennonite Learning Center continues to grow. One class even has a waiting list.

I am grateful for the offender ministry of Al Wengerd and the committee on corrections as well as for the Victim-Offender Reconciliation programs in Lima, Ohio, and Elkhart, Ind.

Finally, I thank God for our partnership with the General Conference Mennonite Church in the development plan, and for the larger conference ministries—like curriculum and evangelism seminars—to our congregations. *Vyron Schmidt*

...this our
hymn of
grateful
praise.

hope
mennonite
church

Hope Mennonite Church in Wichita, Kan. (here presenting its banner at Saskatoon '86) illustrates the new crop of emerging congregations within our conference.

A conference of ethnic varieties

I am thankful for the new vision for church planting and church growth in our Pacific District Conference. The West and particularly the Southwest have been absorbing large numbers of people from different ethnic backgrounds. Some of our churches have been reaching out to these people. Two examples are the Fresno (Calif.) church to the Hmong and Santa Fe Springs (Calif.) to the Spanish and Chinese. There is interest in the Aberdeen (Idaho) congregation in helping start a Mennonite witness in Salt Lake City. Other long-established churches are beginning to ask how they can get involved. The delegates to the conference at Flagstaff, Ariz., in 1985 called on each church to plan to plant a daughter congregation within seven years.

I am also thankful for the concern for spiritual renewal in our congregations. People are concerned that our affluent, increasingly secular society is causing faith to grow cool. They are concerned that the young people in our churches come to faith with a solid commitment to Christ and the church. They are asking questions about what faithfulness means in the face of national idolatry in trusting in weapons systems and in using those systems to oppress other people in the world.

I am also thankful for the increased cooperation with the two district conferences of the Mennonite Church. We have such great need. There are 27 cities in our part of the country with a population of over 100,000 that do not have an Anabaptist Mennonite witness. Cooperation between or even integration of our conferences makes sense if it means that we can be more faithful in carrying out the work of the Lord. I am thankful that our conference is grappling with issues of this kind. *James Wenger*

The honor of being the body of Christ

Here on the prairies, where you can see vast stretches of sameness as far as the eye can see, some people occasionally get tempted to talk of boredom. No beautiful mountain peaks, few scenic valleys and rivers, no Grand Canyon or famous fault in our geology. There are those who look with envy to the people who live in natural areas where God's beautiful creation seems to them more exciting. Such feelings also rub off in our esteem about our local churches and conference. Many feel that the "real action" is not here but somewhere else.

But when we pause to reflect, Manitoba tends to have more than a fair share of blessings from God. Here are a few things for which we give thanks to God in 1986:

Our numbers. While numbers by themselves never determine quality, they do add potential for quality. We have 48 member churches in the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba with over 11,000 members. That means there is much we can do when we get together. And we can look forward to greater things together as we seek God's Spirit leading for the future.

Our new endeavor. At our 1986 annual sessions the provincial delegates voted to engage a full-time staff person in evangelism and church growth. That appointment has been made and his schedule has been full from the outset. It is exciting to see the enthusiasm in our churches for this basic calling of the churches.

Our ongoing ministries. Manitoba has three camps that serve year round. Of the 10,000 people who used our camps in the last year, 1,000 were children who came for spiritual sustenance in the summer. Another 9,000 people came during the other months of the year, about half from non-church and other-church affiliations. Thanks be to God for all the opportunities and for those who served. There were about 14 regular staff and another 500 volunteers who made this ministry possible.

Other ongoing ministries include our hospital chaplaincy for Mennonites from all over Manitoba who suddenly find themselves hospitalized in Winnipeg and our broadcast and related services to thousands of people.

Our challenges. God does not leave Manitoba without challenges. At this time we have a Bible institute campus without a residential program. We count it a privilege that God trusts us enough to give us such a situation. It has already meant many meetings to discern what we can or shall do with such a school in the future. Some creative alternatives are being tried; others are being suggested. It has been one of those surprises that come to all believers who dare to reach out in the faith life. The path is not always rosy and clear; that's part of what makes the Christian life such a thrilling adventure. Sometimes the thrill feels more like thorns and puzzles. But as we join in the pilgrimage of faith as seen in Hebrews 11, invariably, as in the disciples' journey to Emmaus, we again and again discover that in such journeys Jesus is walking with us.

As the future unfolds and we discover that once again we have had the honor of being the body of Christ, we feel like running, jumping and praising with much joy.

Thank-you, God, from Manitoba.
Bernie Wiebe

Outreach *is necessary to battle hunger*

It is difficult for overfed North Americans to keep in mind that people elsewhere are starving because we always have the option of refusing food. There is so much to choose from in the supermarket that we can be quite fussy about what we shall select to purchase. In one brief visit to the market we can experience the advertising call of over 10,000 different food items. We are so overfed that a major struggle for the majority of the population is to refuse food, seeking help from a myriad of weight-reduction diet plans.

For North Americans and people of other developed countries, the major growth in the food industry is in "snack" foods. These foods are to be in addition to the foods eaten for regular meals and encourage the luxury of enjoying foods at any time during the day. No wonder it is so hard to think about those whose major food struggle is for simple replenishment and survival.

When I ask students to estimate the percent of the world's population living in what is termed the Third World, the responses reflect an expected naîveté. When I suggest that two-thirds of the world's people live in the Third World (countries economically poor with a high infant mortality rate and a generally chronically undernourished population) the student responses are typically, "You mean there are that many more of 'them' than there are of 'us'?"

Few have not heard of the famines and crises recently affecting many African countries, including Ethiopia, and involving thousands of people on the edge of starvation. But hunger is far more pervasive than one-time rock concerts and periodic famines would lead us to believe. Fifteen million people die of starvation each year; that is over 40,000 a day. Five hundred million people exist on the edge of starvation, and over 1 billion people live in a chronic state of hunger and malnutrition.

Why? The world has ample food to feed every person adequately. Unfortunately, when we speak about food shortages, implicit in our language is the idea that more would be better—specifically, that more food would solve the hunger problem. We need to realize that, in the global sense, inadequate food production is no longer the source of the problem. We must look elsewhere for the causes of hunger and malnutrition.

The present cause of hunger

The central message of the World Bank's recent policy study, "Poverty and Hunger: Issues and Options for Food Security in Developing Countries," is that from among the many forces that conspire to leave unfed almost one person in five in today's world, poverty stands out as the single most direct cause. Food insecurity results less from the unavailability of food due to distribution problems than from the unavailability of food due to a lack of purchasing power.

A study of 50 developing countries shows a strong association between the energy content of the national diet and per capita income. In India, increases in food production have not improved food security unless food prices fall relative to incomes, thus raising the purchasing power of the poor.

Barbara Stettler

"We are so overfed that a major struggle for the majority of the population is to refuse food, seeking help from a myriad of weight-reduction diet plans."

National policies that can shift resources from large-scale (often transnationally owned) farming to small domestic farms, from export crops to local food crops, from industry to agriculture and from governmental control to local control of the marketplace, can begin to increase food security for its people. And the food security of any one nation is complexly inter-related with the food policies and practices of other nations—specifically those policies and practices of the developed countries of the world.

What can I do?

What should we do with the current surplus of U.S. grain? Provide it as food aid? But food aid (outside of emergency aid to famine crises) reduces incentives to promote agriculture in the host country when food is supplied externally. How about taking care of the U.S. farmer? A market is needed. Then what happens when surpluses diminish and the developing countries are faced with reduced aid and prices too high to afford? This is but one of the many cause-and-effect issues involved in the international web of world hunger.

Hunger is a real, devastating and vastly complex world problem. As one student sighed, "Every time we talk about a new aspect of world hunger—population, food production, distribution, oppression, the pros and cons of food aid, the use of food as a political weapon, etc.—I feel more hopeless. And though I know we have a hunger problem in this country, it all seems so far away, like an issue for action by others more powerful than I. What can I do?"

I'm sure the student wondered why I smiled at him. He didn't say, "There is nothing I can do." He said, "What can I do?"

Outreach is necessary for change

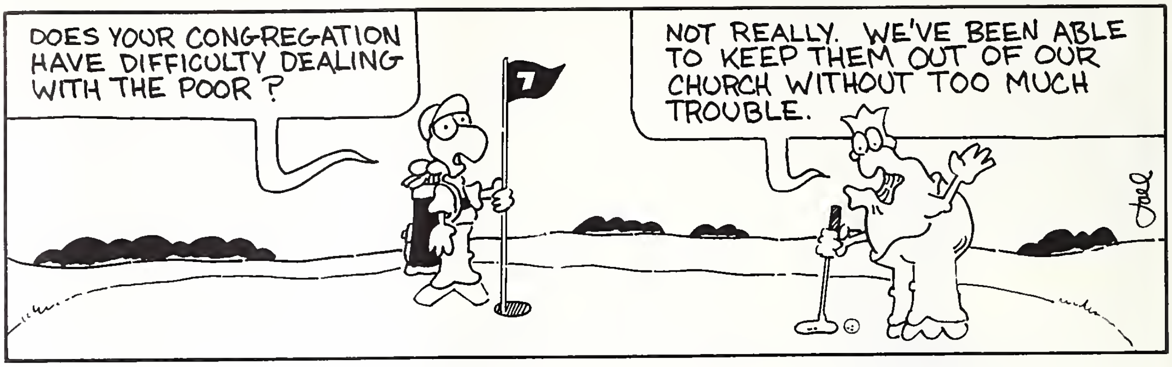
There are many people and groups involved in the efforts to end world hunger. Many major religious organizations are active; many private organizations can be joined or supported; community assistance programs can be formed, letters and contacts with local, state and national political groups are important; and of course, continuing to keep informed about world hunger and sharing one's concern with others is vitally important.

For the past six years, approximately 145 countries have designated and observed Oct. 16 as World Food Day. Each nation plans activities that help to inform, stimulate action and concentrate wisdom on the struggle against world hunger. In the United States a teleconference was broadcast by satellite to receiving sites around the country. Bluffton (Ohio) College served as a receiving site in northwest Ohio. Every citizen can become informed and involved through such activities.

What can we do? Begin by caring enough to recognize the problem and then seek to learn the facts, not the preconceptions, about world hunger. Add to that your willingness to make a commitment to action. No matter how timid or ineffective you feel, do something. Promise yourself you will. Outreach is necessary for change.

Barbara Stettler is assistant professor of home economics at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Pontius' Puddle


DOES YOUR CONGREGATION HAVE DIFFICULTY DEALING WITH THE POOR ?
7
NOT REALLY. WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO KEEP THEM OUT OF OUR CHURCH WITHOUT TOO MUCH TROUBLE.

NEWS

Roth challenges Zaire Mennonites to be in mission

AIMM meets in Manitoba

Steinbach, Man. (Meetinghouse)—The semiannual board meeting of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission met Oct. 15-18. Replacing former executive secretary James Bertsche, Earl Roth, former missionary to Zaire, summarized activities in the five fields; Burkina Faso, Botswana, Lesotho, Transkei and Zaire.

In Burkina Faso, a newer field, "lives are being transformed and a church is emerging," Roth said. In Botswana, Lesotho and Transkei, AIMM works with the African Independent Churches, proposing long-range goals and personnel for a continued ministry. Zaire, where the work began 75 years ago, includes the cities of Kinshasa, Kikwit, Kananga and Mbuji Mayi, which "offer unlimited possibilities for reaching the unreached with the gospel." "I believe," said Roth, "that one of the greatest challenges for AIMM today is to increase efforts to reach the urban centers of Zaire."

Roth included the following challenge for Mennonites in Kinshasa (Communaute Evangelique au Zaire—CEM) and the Mennonite Community of Zaire (Communaute Mennonite au Zaire—CMZA): "AIMM began work in Zaire in obedience to the Great Commission of Christ. Out of this obedience CMZA and CEM were born. Now they too have a responsibility to obey the command to 'go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.' Missions must be made vital to CMZA and CEM. For AIMM and its missionaries, development of these churches should not be complete until they are guided to reach out in obedience to the God-given command to put action into a mission outreach and witness throughout Africa and the world."

AIMM treasurer Art Janz expressed his gratitude for the faithfulness of the participating conferences in providing funds for budget needs. A 1987 budget of over $300,000 was accepted. This does not include missionary salaries.

In Burkina Faso, where there may be 17-20 missionaries in 1987, a teacher, church planting teams and hostel parents are needed.

Gary Groot, a medical doctor who worked in Kalonda, Zaire, startled board members by describing how difficult it is to operate by flashlight. A special project—to install solar panels at three hospitals—was presented.

At the Sunday night rally, Bob Gerhart, coordinator of communications for AIMM, interviewed Earl Roth (via puppet). Two missionaries, Sandra Friesen (Zaire) and Lois Thiessen (Burkina Faso), gave testimonies. Both are formerly from Steinbach. A multimedia presentation, "There Is a River," was shown, and the evening ended with a birthday cake.

Africa Inter-Mennonite Missions is a partnership of six denominations: the Evangelical Mennonite Church, the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference and the Mennonite Brethren. AIMM has approximately 80 missionaries serving in its five countries. *Dave Schellenberg*

AIMM
75
anniversary

The Sunday night public rally at Steinbach Evangelical Mennonite Church celebrated AIMM's 75th anniversary with a service of gratitude and praise.

Quest for Peace is an effort to match the $100 million approved by the U.S. Congress for the contras with $100 million in true humanitarian aid to the people of Nicaragua. In its first year, participants in Quest for Peace delivered $27 million in humanitarian aid to match the last aid package to the contras. Quest for Peace accepts money and supplies. Donated humanitarian supplies, such as food, clothing and medicine, are exempt from the U.S. government embargo. For information contact Quixote Center, Box 5206, Hyattsville, MD 20782, (301) 864-2182.

The political situation in southern Sudan has worsened during the last months, reports Mennonite Central Committee country representative Carl Yusavitz, home on leave for several weeks. Fighting between government forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army has left over 2 million people vulnerable to starvation in southern Sudan. MCC has 14 workers in Sudan working with women's programs, Christian education and in refugee camps as health workers, administrators and maintenance staff.

The late Doris Janzen Longacre's poem "Things that Life Is Too Short For" is the focus of the 1987 desk calendar produced for congregational and business evangelism by Mennonite Board of Missions. The calendar is a handy tool for pastoral calls and hospital and nursing home visits. Businesses use it to build customer relations. Congregational imprints are available. For copies of the calendar write to Mennonite Board of Missions, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

Mennonites gather to talk about evangelism

Mennonites are serious about starting new congregations. The Consultation on Anabaptist Vision and Church Planting (Oct. 20-21 in Harrisonburg, Va.) attracted some 90 people from 18 states and five Canadian provinces. They came not only to learn effective methods for forming churches in new locations but also how to carry out the task in ways that reflect an Anabaptist-Mennonite view of what a New Testament church should be.

Three General Conference Mennonites served as resource people: Lois Barrett, teaching minister at Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan.; Adam Liu, pastor at Santa Clara (Calif.) Ethnic Chinese Mennonite Church and Santa Clara Mennonite Church; and Marilyn Miller, pastor at Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Participants included individuals and couples from established churches who have sensed a call to relocate in a new area, urban or more rural, to share a Mennonite presence and witness. Representatives of Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite mission commissions also attended.

Two speakers addressed a basic assumption regarding church planting—one approaching the topic from the practical experience and the other in a more theoretical, reflective way. Each session concluded with discussion in small groups.

Lindsey Robinson, an associate director of home missions with Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, Salunga, Pa., noted that as a result of being with Jesus "the disciples' eyes were opened to a new vision, the Scriptures were revealed to them and their mouths were opened to proclaim the Word."

Diane Stitt Melchert told how she developed a call to urban ministry while a student in the late 1970s at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. Through a gift-discernment process while she was serving as a youth minister in Cleveland she identified Philadelphia as the place she should go.

"The first step in church planting is getting to know the community and its needs," she declared. "I spent more than two years roaming the neighborhood, doing more listening than talking."

Finally, she said, she "gave the Lord six months to show me what I should do or get out." Two weeks later she was asked to help with a feasibility study for developing a church in West Philadelphia.

She drew up a proposal and made herself available to start a church. A group began meeting in July 1984 and a strong congregation, the West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship, emerged.

Adam Liu, a pastor at two General Conference Mennonite congregations in Santa Clara, Calif., described his call to come to the United States six years ago in response to a vision for ministry here. Working with refugees from Southeast Asia and helping them with basic human needs opened the door to sharing Christ.

"We cannot separate spiritual and social needs of people," Liu maintained. "The incarnate Christ was a fusion of the human and divine, and just like Jesus and the early Anabaptists, we must demonstrate both aspects in our ministries."

Among the affirmations was the need for church planters to sense the "lostness" of people and their need for a Savior. A sense of urgency should characterize all efforts to reach people and to invite them to join in the Christian walk, the group agreed.

A second key idea was the importance of church planters modeling Christian discipleship—demonstrating in word and deed who Jesus is—and having a core group of supporters to advise and to encourage them in their evangelistic work.

Lindsey Robinson said that Jesus' conversation with the two disciples on the Emmaus road (Luke 24) is an appropriate Anabaptist model for evangelism.

The group also affirmed:

- that in the life of the resurrected community there is the cross; the Christian is not free from the reality of suffering;
- that prayer and the leading of the Spirit of God are critical to all church planting efforts;
- that each member of the body of Christ is gifted with many special capabilities for ministry and mission and that all people must be seen as having worth and potential in the kingdom; and
- that peace is at the heart of the gospel, and this message should not be circumvented in bringing new Christians into the church.

The group also noted the need for more work to be done on questions of leadership in newly formed congregations and on the nature of unity.

A set of three cassettes with the six major presentations is available for $15 by writing to the seminary or by calling (703) 433-2771, ext. 260. *Jim Bishop*

Due to low application numbers, Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Man., will not be offering a residential program this coming winter. Instead a wide variety of short courses will be offered, both on campus and in local congregations. For information contact the Elim office, Box 120, Altona, MB R0G 0B0, (204) 324-8631.

Day One Ministries, affiliated with the Eastern District Conference, is committed to educating the church toward a biblical ethic of sexual abstinence and recovery from homosexuality. It also works with a local Homosexuals Anonymous recovery ministry. Director Earl Miller invites those wanting to be free of homosexuality to contact him at Box 491, Allentown, PA 18102, (215) 282-4164 for information or referral in one's area.

The Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns, which began in 1976 with a small mailing list, held its first convention Oct. 10-12 in Chicago. Among the 110 participants were parents, siblings and friends of lesbian and gay people. Mary Cline Detrick, Elgin, Ill., spoke about the Church of the Brethren's position regarding homosexuality. Sue Goerzen, Harrow, Ont., discussed the work of the joint Mennonite Church/General Conference Mennonite Church task force on human sexuality. For information contact BMC, Box 65274, Washington, DC 20035, (202) 462-2595.

Human Sexuality resolution prompts review of CHM employment policy

Elkhart, Ind. (GCMC)—The Commission on Home Ministries spent a portion of its fall meetings, Oct. 31-Nov. 2, reviewing its employment policy in light of the recent conference action on human sexuality.

Last July delegates at the triennial session in Saskatoon passed a resolution which said that "sexual intercourse is reserved for a man and a woman united in marriage and that violation of this teaching is sin. It is our understanding that this teaching also precludes homosexual as well as premarital and extramarital sexual activity."

The impetus for the policy review came after Lynn Keenan, then associate director of Mennonite Voluntary Service, announced at Saskatoon '86 that she had resigned from her post because she was a practicing homosexual and therefore not in agreement with conference beliefs.

While commission members had differing opinions about homosexuality, they agreed to use the 1986 resolution on human sexuality as a guide for future personnel matters. In addition the commission approved three recommendations for the General Board to consider in the personnel and structural review they are presently administering in consultation with all the commissions.

The first recommendation brought by Bob Hull, secretary for peace and justice, calls for the CHM employment policy to require all employees, with the exception of MVS workers, to be members of a Mennonite congregation. All CHM employees would also need to be in agreement with the 1986 resolution on human sexuality as well as the 1971 declaration that war is sin. "If we are going to treat homosexuality as sin, then we need to discern what else we have called sin," said Hull, who is compiling a list of resolutions from past conferences.

The Hull recommendation also asks that the commission be in contact with the employee's congregation when it comes to hiring and termination decisions. "The Commission on Home Ministries looks to the believers gathered in the employee's congregation for discernment with respect to the sins declared in the 1971 and 1986 resolutions," says the statement.

"That's pretty radically Anabaptist," said a staff member.

MVS workers who are not required to belong to a Mennonite congregation would be accountable to their congregational support committees.

The second recommendation calls for a revision of the booklet for mission and service worker candidates which would spell out the ethical expectations in terms of sexuality, marriage, family and community life. The final recommendation involves putting a question on the application form for mission and service workers asking whether they have read and are in agreement with the statements.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen, commission chair, said she sensed a "beautiful spirit" at work during the discussion. "The commission worked with the kind of spirit that does not avoid dealing with diversity yet presumes unity in Christ," she said.

CHM also spent time meeting with the Home Ministries division of the Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

In other action CHM approved the addition of the part-time position of a Many People's coordinator for 1987. The coordinator will be responsible for consulting with minority groups in the General Conference Mennonite Church to find more ways to include them in the conference family. Don Yoder's position as secretary for evangelism and church planting was increased from part time to full time. *John Bender*

Ediger resigns MVS, pastoral posts

Elkhart, Ind. (GCMC)—Citing personal reasons, Peter Ediger, director of Mennonite Voluntary Service for the Commission on Home Ministries, gave his resignation to the commission at its fall meeting Oct. 31-Nov. 2.

The resignation will take effect in March 1987. Ediger has served in the half-time position since September 1976. "We have always appreciated Peter's openness and honesty about feelings and issues," said Stan Bohn, CHM executive secretary.

Ediger has also resigned as co-pastor of Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, where he has been pastor for 11 years and co-pastor for the last 10 years. "I will keep in fellowship and mission with the Mennonite church in one way or another. I have a deep appreciation for the church," he said.

Ediger said he has a lot of appreciation for the Mennonites and especially for CHM. "I'm aware that there are times when I have come short of the glory of God and needed the grace of God," he said. "I wish for God's grace for the Mennonite church and for the Arvada Church in the future."

Canadian-American friendship is being tested by the recently imposed duty on Canada's lumber, says Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. He warned Americans the "pernicious" U.S. duty will hit where it hurts most—in higher costs. The 15 percent duty will be passed on to Americans, Mulroney said, adding, "Protectionism ultimately costs you; it has to cost you and costs me if I retaliate." In an interview on PBS's MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour, Mulroney said the "ordinary American citizen today trying to build a house is going to pay more for it because of that kind of pernicious action against Canada."

A second round of peace meetings for Mennonites and Presbyterians has been set for the weekend of Jan. 9-11, 1987, at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center near Mt. Pleasant, Pa. Planners have decided to focus on personal case studies on conflict coming out of Central America, North American business and South Africa. The conference theme is "Between the Word and the World: Reconciling Peace and Justice." Two theologians from the respective churches will reflect on the case studies: M. Richard Shaull of Princeton Theological Seminary and LeRoy Friesen of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

Larry Hills, missionary with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in the Transkei, was detained with six others by Transkei authorities on Oct. 31. Hills and five of the others were released Nov. 13 without being charged. Hills said he was not mistreated.

Lack of leadership, funds frustrates COE

Chicago (GCMC)—If there was one thing the members and staff of the Commission on Education hoped to accomplish at their fall meeting Oct. 30-Nov. 1, it was the appointment of a new executive secretary.

But the last-minute withdrawal of the final candidate for the position meant that COE was once again "left at sea," said Rosella Wiens Regier, secretary for children's education.

Since the resignation of J. W. Sprunger became effective Aug. 31, J. Winfield Fretz has been acting as the interim executive secretary for COE. He agreed to serve in this capacity for up to one year.

A lack of permanent leadership and adequate funds has taken its toll on COE programs. When Jim Dunn left the position of secretary for young adult and church school education in December 1985, COE decided to contract with the Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church for a portion of its student and young adult program. "We're improvising," said Fretz. "We are doing less programatically."

For 1987 the COE board decided to continue its contract with MBM and to contract with the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries of the Mennonite Church for the development of a family life program. "There is a universal crisis of the family. We haven't done enough in this area, which is why it is necessary that we go to the Mennonite Church," said Fretz.

Mennonite Marriage Encounter, a COE program since 1977, will also be put on hold for awhile. A short-term proposal was adopted by the board to hire a part-time coordinator to take the place of MME consultants Randy and Myrna Krehbiel, who will be leaving Jan. 31, 1987. The Krehbiels shared a full-time position as coordinators for MME and family life until their termination on Aug. 31. The new coordinator will be primarily responsible for providing basic support services for MME team couples.

"What we decide to do with Mennonite Marriage Encounter in the short term may decide what happens in the long term," said a commission member. "I find reluctance to let go of a program because of unresolved staff problems."

"The struggle is that COE can't afford a full-time person," countered Fretz.

In a joint session with MBCM, the option to make MME an inter-Mennonite program was discussed.

Even though COE is supporting less staff, the board had to work hard to find a way to fund the MME, family life and student and young adult programs. They tentatively adopted a $422,253 budget, $43,914 of which would go to support these three programs.

Faith and Life Bookstore, Newton, Kan., is in worse financial shape, however. "We have no cash reserves whatsoever and are currently running at a deficit," said Brent Sprunger, bookstore manager. "This is not an unusual situation at this time of the year, but the deficit is higher than we've experienced in the past."

"Religious bookstores have a history of financial struggle," said Fretz. "I don't see a time when things are going to get better."

Several options for the bookstore were examined by the COE board, but no decisions were made. The executive committee will make a recommendation to the board at Council of Commissions in March.

In other action, COE and MBCM endorsed a plan for integrated youth ministry as presented by Paula Diller Lehman and Lavon Welty, youth workers for COE and MBCM, respectively.

COE members and staff expressed appreciation for the time spent with MBCM in meetings, worship and meals. "There was a real sense of congeniality," said Louise Friesen, COE member from Saskatoon. It was the first time COE and MBCM had met together to compare structures and look for additional ways to cooperate in the future. *Carla Reimer*

The Commission on Education (GCMC) and the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MC) met together for the first time Oct. 30-Nov. 1 in Chicago. Below, left to right: Elaine Rich (GCMC), Bluffton, Ohio; Irene Klassen (GCMC), Calgary; Martha Smith Good (MC), New Hamburg, Ont.; Ardys Becker (GCMC), Richmond, B.C.; Vern Preheim, GCMC general secretary, Newton, Kan.; and Jannie Holloway (MC), Wichita, Kan.

Lonnie Hofer, Omaha, Neb., will be the speaker for evangelistic services at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., Nov. 28-30. Hofer and his wife, Sharon, also sing, give children's messages and show multimedia presentations. During Thanksgiving week, Nov. 23-30, First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., is holding its annual Mission Festival. This year's festival included a celebration of the 75th anniversary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Martha F. Graber, former program director of Inter-Mennonite Council on Aging, recommends a conference on "Religion, Spirituality and Aging" in Atlanta on Jan. 14, 1987. Sponsored by the American Society on Aging, the one-day emphasis follows a three-day conference on "Everyday Ethics in an Aging Society: Hard Times, Hard Choices." Graber is a member of the society's committee on religion, spirituality and aging. For information on the conferences, contact Marcia Freedman, (415) 543-2617, or write 833 Market St., Suite 51, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Mennonite Mental Health Services is again awarding scholarships to college or graduate students pursuing careers in mental health fields. The scholarships, to be awarded in the spring for the 1987-88 academic year, are available from the Elmer Ediger Memorial Scholarship Fund. To qualify for the scholarships, to be between $500 and $1,000, candidates must be college juniors, seniors or graduate students with a declared major and vocational interest in mental health, developmental disabilities or related fields. Application deadline is March 1, 1987. For forms, write Carl L. Good, MMHS, Box M, Akron, PA 17501.

Mennonite Indian Leaders Council holds annual meetings

Busby, Mont. (GCMC)—Approximately 20 delegates from the Cheyenne, Arapahoe and Hopi tribes gathered here for the ninth annual Mennonite Indian Leaders Council Oct. 8-12.

The delegates, representing the Hopi Mission School and the Mennonite churches in Arizona, Montana and Oklahoma, shared about the year's activities and proportioned the $142,800 in subsidies from the Commission on Home Ministries.

CHM increased its subsidies to MILC by 6 percent for 1987, 4 percent of which will help fund the Phoenix Urban Indian Ministry Development. "MILC has wanted to see this project happen for at least 10 years," said Stan Bohn, CHM executive secretary. The purpose of the program is to look for ways to support the Native American population in Phoenix, Ariz.

"We see many Indian people moving to the cities looking for work or training that they can't find on the reservation. We want to find ways to support these people because life in the city can be pretty difficult for them," said Elmer G. Myron, project coordinator, Phoenix. The Phoenix Urban Indian Ministry Development is also sponsored by CHM, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Board of Missions.

Several churches also embarked on new projects. Bob and Nancy Koehn, Herold Mennonite Church, Cordell, Okla., were recently hired by the Oklahoma Fellowship Committee to be the pastors for the Zion Mennonite Church of Canton, Koinonia Fellowship of Clinton, Bethel Mennonite Fellowship of Hammon and the Seiling Indian Mennonite Church. Previously only the Bethel Mennonite Church had a pastor available on Sundays.

Elmer Myron, who coordinates the Phoenix Urban Indian Ministry Development

"The reason for the change is twofold," said Betty Hart, Clinton, Okla. "One is so that each congregation will have a pastor once a month, and two, it is to encourage lay leadership on the Sundays when a pastor isn't there."

1986 was a "banner year" for the Petter Memorial Church, Lame Deer, Mont., reported Maurice Limberhand. Members have been revitalized by the church building project—Sunday school attendance, worship service attendance and giving have all increased in the past year, he said. A readiness committee composed of church members has also formed to take on the task of raising the $150,000 needed to build the foundation and renovate the church building, which was donated by a Lutheran congregation in Frazer, Mont.

"The Lord has given us 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 as his promise that when we invest our total lives for the cause of Christ in others . . . that he will bless abundantly in a great variety of ways, including spiritual surprises," said Limberhand.

Having an expensive building project ahead of them, however, did not stop the Petter Memorial Mennonite Church from reaching out to others in need. They took an offering for the Salem Mennonite Church in Freeman, S.D., when they heard that that church building had been destroyed by fire. Likewise the Ashland (Mont.) Christian Fellowship tithed money for outside missions, even though the church isn't self-supporting. "The rest of us thrifty Mennonites can sure learn a lot about stewardship from the Indian people," said Bohn.

Cooperation and goodwill went beyond Mennonite circles—the Ashland and Busby congregations each joined with the local Catholic church in their communities for a procession on Good Friday. "We carried a cross through town and planted it on a hill just outside town. This helped us to see our common bond in the death of Jesus Christ," described a church report.

The Moencopi (Ariz.) Mennonite Church continues to operate a Thrift Shop and corn-grinding service with the proceeds going toward the Eoqhunki Alcoholism Program. Currently a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker is needed to direct the alcoholism program. The White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Busby, also continued to provide alcohol counseling. In January the church cosponsored a one-day chemical dependency workshop with the Busby school and participated in the reservation-wide Alcoholism/Chemical Dependency Awareness Week in September.

The Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., has 40 Hopi students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Seventh and eighth grades were dropped in 1986 due to a lack of teachers, inadequate classroom space and the opening of a new Hopi junior and senior high school in nearby Polacco, Ariz.

At the end of the four-day meeting the White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church hosted a "giveaway" ceremony where they honored guests by giving them blankets, shawls, food and other items of value.

Also attending the MILC meeting were representatives from CHM, MCC, MBM and Native Ministries in Canada. *Carla Reimer with information from Elmer Myron*

"Rediscovering Matthew" will be the focus of the annual Pastors' Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., Jan. 26-30, 1987. Worship, preaching and the arts, including music, drama, film and storytelling will be used. Richard Gardner, from the Church of the Brethren and writer of the forthcoming Believers' Church Commentary on Matthew, will present a daily exegesis. Registration costs are $45 and $25 for accompanying spouse, plus lodging and meals. For more information write Erick Sawatzky, Pastors' Workshop, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man., held a leadership retreat Sept. 12-14 at Pioneer Camp on the shores of Shoal Lake, Ont. Twenty-two of the school's committee and student council members participated in the weekend setting goals for their respective areas of responsibility. The film *Gandhi* was shown. These words of Bernard of Clairvaux provided a summary of the weekend's theme: "Learn the lesson that, if you are to do the work of a [leader], what you need is not a sceptre but a hoe."

The 27th annual Christmas Peace Pilgrimage from Nazareth to Bethlehem in eastern Pennsylvania will be held on Saturday, Dec. 13. The 10-mile pilgrimage begins at 1 p.m. in Nazareth and ends at 8 p.m. with a candlelight ceremony in Bethlehem. For details call Joe Osborn at (215) 866-3127.

MCC aids flood victims in India

Mennonite Central Committee has provided 18 metric tons of rice, 12.9 metric tons of lentils, tarpaulins and water-treatment materials to people in India forced to leave their homes due to floods.

Heavy rains the last 10 days of September inundated Midnapore and other areas of India's West Bengal province, reports Peter Peters, MCC country representative in India.

The MCC aid, worth about $23,000, was distributed through three Midnapore organizations MCC has also worked with in the past. About 11,000 flood victims were given cooked rice and lentils, about 250 grams (just over a half pound) a day, from 14 distribution centers, writes Daniel Biswas, MCC India staff person who coordinated this relief effort.

The organizations also distributed 400 13- by 15-foot pieces of tarpaulin for making temporary shelters and about 8,000 Halogen tablets and 30 bags of bleaching powder. Flood victims use the tablets and powder to purify water for drinking. Here cooks prepare to distribute boiled rice and lentils to flood victims.

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Make checks payable to Salem Mennonite Church, Box 7, Kidron, OH 44618.

Great Trek for 1987 to be held in Banff, Alta.

"We're Building on the Rock!" is the theme of Great Trek 3, a Canadian Mennonite Youth Assembly, which will be held Dec. 29, 1987-Jan. 1, 1988. It is hoped that 500 youth ages 16-20+ and their sponsors will descend on the Banff (Alta.) Center for four days of activity, interaction and inspiration. John H. Neufeld, president, and Marilyn Peters Kliewer, admissions counselor, at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, will develop the theme during the four worship sessions. A series of vocational and topical seminars will be offered. The storytelling evening will feature faith stories of how God's presence has given hope during times of adversity.

Planners say, "Our hope for Great Trek 3 is that we will experience the gift of God's creation, will learn of God's gracious presence in our lives and will celebrate our new life in Christ, finding new hope and responsibilities as we continue in our journey of faith. Our hope is that one sponsor will accompany every 10 youth who participate. The cost for sponsors will be $140 plus transportation, and for youth $185 plus transportation."

Western Ontario Mennonite Conference, Mennonite Conference of Ontario and Quebec, and Northwest Mennonite Conference have been invited to become partners and participants in the youth assembly. Great Trek 3 is sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Committee members are Abe Bergen, Aiden Enns, Karen Guenther, Anna Rehan, Colleen Shantz-Hilkes, Greg Snider and Bruce Wiebe.
Abe Bergen

Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg has initiated the process to plant a new congregation. While seen as an undertaking of the whole congregation, seven members were commissioned at the Sept. 21 morning worship: Bill and Dolores Block, Bert and Martha Lobe, Steve Schroeder, Werner and Adelia Neufeld Wiens. They made a two-year commitment to become part of a new nucleus of people for the purpose of worship, fellowship and service.

Enrollment at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., is up by six students over last fall, according to registrar Ruth Ann Gardner. "However, the total number of credit hours is considerably up, increasing the full-time equivalency by 18 students," she said. Overall enrollment stands at 222—120 at Goshen Biblical Seminary and 102 at Mennonite Biblical Seminary. There are 132 men and 90 women. Full-time Canadian students number 23.

Bursaries totaling $44,000 have been awarded by the Company of 1000 to 35 students for theological studies for the 1986-87 academic year. Most of these students are studying at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind. Others are in seminary-level studies at other schools. The Company of 1000 is a voluntary fellowship of people within the Conference of Mennonites in Canada who contribute $50 or more annually to a study reserve fund administered by the committee on ministerial leadership. For more information contact Company of 1000, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, (204) 888-6781.

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workers

Bergen

Boese

Espindola

Fast

Brown

Epp

Janzen

Killam

Norma Bergen, Grace Church, Prince Albert, Sask., began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service term Sept. 1 as a child-care worker at Friendship Day Care Center, Hutchinson, Kan. Her parents are Maria and Jacob Bergen of Prince Albert.

Linda Boese, Koerner Heights Mennonite Brethren Church, Newton, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Aug. 25 in child care in Hutchinson, Kan. She received a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. Her parents are Eldon and Joanna Boese of Redding, Iowa.

Vivian Brown, Trinity Covenant Church, Salem, Ore., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 on the faculty of Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz. She received bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary education from Oregon College of Education. Her mother is Eva Hagan of Salem.

Tim Epp, Hope Mennonite Fellowship, North Battleford, Sask., has begun a two-year MVS term on staff at the Welcome Inn Community Friendship Centre in Hamilton, Ont. His parents are Elma and Gilbert Epp of North Battleford.

Miguel Angel Espindola, 39, died of an epileptic seizure on Oct. 26. Espindola participated in the Hispanic Pastoral Leadership Program of the General Conference Mennonite Church from 1983-85. He helped plant two Hispanic Mennonite congregations in Chicago. Espindola is survived by his wife, Maria Sonia, and two children, Maria Virginia and Cesar Gustavo.

Lester and *Winifred Ewy*, First Church, Hutchinson, Kan., have begun two-year Mennonite Central Committee terms as farm community issues coordinators.

Becky Fast, Bethel Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., has begun a one-year MVS term on the Central American Peace Campaign staff in Seattle. She received a bachelor's degree in education and speech from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. Her parents are Alvin and Velma Fast of Bingham, Minn.

Donna Forsman, Fairfield (Pa.) Church, has begun a two-year MCC term in Ephrata, Pa., as advertising coordinator for SELFHELP Crafts. She received a bachelor's degree in fine arts from Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. Her parents are Betty and Jim Granger of Alexandria, Va.

Gwen Groff, Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., has begun a three-year MCC term in Clun, England, as writer and researcher for the European Nuclear Disarmament Churches Lateral Committee. She received a bachelor's degree in English from Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster. Her parents are Anna Marie and Harold Groff of Strasburg, Pa.

Janet Habegger is the new admissions counselor at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Hedy Janzen, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, began a one-year MVS term Oct. 6 as office manager for Synapses in Chicago. Her parents are George and Helen Janzen of Winnipeg.

Paul Jackson has been appointed

The executive committee of the Bethel College board of directors accepted and endorsed a policy from the financial affairs committee on the issue of college investments in South Africa as long as the current apartheid policy is practiced by the South African government. Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., "does not have investments in any companies doing business in South Africa," according to the statement. "We will continue not to invest in any companies doing business in South Africa unless we are satisfied that it is in the best interest of South Africa and it does not hinder progress or aid oppression."

Development works, says a report by the Canadian International Development Agency. In the last 20 years, per capita incomes have doubled, despite enormous population growth, and overall economic growth rates are greater than those of developed countries. Infant mortality has been cut in half, while life expectancy has been increased by more than 10 years. For the first time in history, the report says, there are more literate than illiterate people in the world.

RECORd

Kottmann

Kozlowski

director of administrative computing at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Anne Killam, Trinity United Church, Newmarket, Ont., began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 on the Pleasant Valley Outdoor Center staff in Woodstock, Ill. Her parents are Verna and William Killam of Newmarket.

Lyn Kottmann, Lyons, Kan., began a one-year MVS term Oct. 1 as director of the Broadway Assistance Center in Denver. She received a bachelor's degree in foods and nutrition science from Kansas State University in Manhattan. Her parents are Helen and Louis Kottmann of Lyons.

Mary Kozlowski, Our Mother of Consolation, Mt. Carmel, Pa., began a two-year MVS term Sept. 23 on staff at the Friendly Visitor Service in St. Catharines, Ont. She received a bachelor's degree in social work from Lock Haven (Pa.) University. Her parents are Joseph and Mary Kozlowski of Mt. Carmel, Pa.

Elmer Myron and family moved to Phoenix, Ariz., last summer to coordinate Phoenix Urban Indian Ministry, requiring two-fifths of his time. He will seek Native Americans who have moved from their reservations to Phoenix and provide them with a place to fellowship with other Indians, mainly Navajo and Hopi. There are 23,000 Native Americans in the Phoenix area. Three-fifths of his time is with Hopi ministries.

David Wiebe has been appointed director of evangelism and church growth for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba. He began Sept. 1.

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The Commission on Overseas Mission invites interested young people (college-age) to participate in a summer '87 missions service assignment in Colombia, South America.

For further information, please write or call Personnel Secretary, Commission on Overseas Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

Staff writer/editor needed at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters, Akron, Pa.

Contact MCC Personnel Services at 21 S. 12th St., Box M, Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151, or 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, (204) 261-6381.

MCC Canada
Personnel assistant, Winnipeg
Assignment starting date: Jan. 5, 1987
Qualifications:
—previous MCC experience
—can communicate sensitively with applicants
—willing to travel to Western provinces
—experience in addressing groups preferable
—administrative skills and organizational ability
Responsibilities: (shared)
—processing applications of persons considering a voluntary service assignment
—coordinating the placement of applicants in Canadian assignments
—recruiting for volunteers in churches and schools
—planning and conducting one North American and one SALT Canada orientation per year
—preparing reports

For application form call Harold Koslowsky, Coordinator of Personnel and Administrative Services, (204) 261-6381, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

MCC Canada
Office assistant, Ottawa
Assignment starting date: Dec. 8, 1986
Qualifications:
—Low German facility
—inclination to do thorough work unsupervised
—ability to write
Responsibilities:
—secretarial work
—office and financial managing work
—Kanadier work with Mexican Mennonites
—other services such as responding to constituents and obtaining visas for MCC workers

For application form call Harold Koslowsky, Coordinator of Personnel and Administrative Services, (204) 261-6381, MCC Canada, 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9.

Administrator/director required **Silver Lake Mennonite Camp.** Full-time position beginning **Jan. 1, 1987**.

Apply in confidence to: George Janzen, 247 Carleton St., St. Catharines, ON L2M 1B5.

An MCC financial update

- **Giving to MCC is substantially down**
  MCC expects that its total 1986 income will be almost $3 million less than in 1985. Contributions from Mennonite conferences are down by 30%. Total U.S. contributions are down 22% from 1985, although up 6.3% from 1984. MCC is no longer receiving significant contributions for African famine relief.

- **MCC does not have extra money set aside**
  Since the beginning of 1986, MCC's balances are down $1 million. So that it can carry out its ongoing service and relief programs, MCC keeps on hand fund balances large enough to cover approximately 2 months of operating expenses.

- **MCC will have less money for worldwide need in 1987 than in 1986 — unless there is a turnaround**
  Expenses in 1986 are significantly greater than income. Since March 1985, the last month of exceptional Ethiopia giving, contributions have been flat. Unless this pattern changes, MCC anticipates less income in 1987 than in 1986. This means MCC will not be able to meet requests from field staff and local partners for new programs in response to urgent need.

- **Worldwide need calls for your help**
  Refugees, disaster victims, the hungry, the sick and the homeless need our compassionate response. With your help there is much more that MCC can do to respond to needs around the world.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
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RESOURCES

Add Justice to Your Shopping List (Herald Press, 1986) by Marilyn Helmuth Voran considers how consumers both participate in and are victims of injustice. It costs $2.95 ($4.15 in Canada).

A new videocassette series from Sojourners, **The Rise of Christian Conscience**, consists of talks given at the Peace Pentecost 1985 conference in Washington. The three-part series contains "Roots of Christian Conscience," "Streams of Christian Conscience" and "Be Not Afraid" and costs $195.

In **Belonging** (Zondervan, 1986), S. D. Gaede, professor of sociology at Gordon College, analyzes the human need for community and identifies the major forces in today's fast-moving, fragmented society that undermine the relationships that make people human and life worth living. It costs $9.95.

Now available through all provincial Mennonite Central Committee offices is a new audiovisual and accompanying pamphlet of **SALT** (Serve and Learn Together), a one-year work/education program for 17- to 21-year-olds.

When Someone You Love Is Dying (Zondervan, 1986) by Ruth Kopp is a handbook of practical help for those who seek to provide care and comfort to friends and loved ones who are terminally ill. It costs $8.95.

Geared for pastors, seminarians and professors of practical theology, **Dynamics in Pastoring** (Eerdmans, 1986) by Jacob Firet presents the field of pastoral theology on its scriptural foundations. It costs $24.95.

The International Bible Commentary (Zondervan, 1986), F. F. Bruce, general editor, is a revision of the *New Layman's Commentary*. It costs $24.95.

Mennonite World Conference has begun publishing **Courier**, a 16-page magazine focusing on the worldwide Mennonite church. The new quarterly takes the place of the former *MWC Newsletter*. *Courier* is edited by David Shelly, who also edits *Correo*, a Spanish-language sister publication.

Rachel's Hope (Herald Press, 1986) by Carole Gift Page is a novel with a contemporary setting and current problems. It costs $5.95 ($8.35 in Canada).

Barbara Smucker's story of the Mennonites in the Russian revolution, *Days of Terror*, has been published in Barcelona and Madrid under the Spanish title **Nubes Negras**.

Exercise as You Grow Older (Good Books, 1986) by Naomi Lederach, Nona Kauffman and Beth Lederach demonstrates that fitness includes regular exercise, sensible diet, healthy family relationships and a generous dose of humor. The book costs $9.95.

A new intergenerational resource is available to congregations and other groups wanting to study aging. **Young or Old or In Between** (Faith and Life Press, 1986), edited by Bertha Harder, is a three-item set—a leader's guide (47 pages, $7.95), a reader (84 pages, $5.95) and a leader's packet ($9.95).

In **Dr. Frau** (Good Books, 1986) Grace Kaiser, a family doctor in Lancaster County, Pa., recollects 28 years of work among Lancaster's "plain people." The book costs $14.95.

A new magazine called **Weavings**, "a Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life," has been launched. (The title is an allusion to Paul's description in Colossians 2:2 of Christians "knit" or "woven" together in love.) The editor is John Mogabgab, a former associate of Henri Nouwen at Yale University. The bimonthly magazine is published by The Upper Room, Box 189, Nashville, TN 37202.

Against Silence: the Voice and Vision of Elie Wiesel (Holocaust Library, 1986), edited by Irving Abrahamson, includes the Nobel Peace Prize winner's lectures, reviews, interviews, dialogues, forewords, essays, comments on topical and urgent matters and his own interpretations of his works. The three-volume, 1,188-page work costs $85.

In the revised edition of **Youth Ministry—Its Renewal in the Local Church** (Zondervan, 1986) author Lawrence O. Richards addresses the ongoing concerns of youth. It costs $16.95.

Beyond These Mountains (Kindred Press, 1986) by Dick Thiessen is the story of Isaac Wiens' struggle for freedom after the Russian revolution. It costs $7.35 ($9.95 in Canada).

Edited by Ruth Unrau, **Encircled** (Faith and Life, 1986) is a collection of the biographies of 33 women, most of them from the General Conference. It is available for $12.95 from FLP, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

What's Right with Feminism (Eerdmans, 1986) by Elaine Storkey puts the complex landscape of the women's movement in perspective. It costs $9.95.

Lord, Don't Let Me Be Bored! (Westminster, 1986) by G. Lloyd Rediger offers a revitalization for the mind, heart and spirit. It costs $9.95.

Joel Kauffman, creator/syndicator of the cartoon strip Pontius' Puddle, has written **Wolfhunter** (Abington Press, 1986), a book geared for children ages 6-12. The book, based on a screenplay of the same title by Kauffman, is about a 12-year-old boy who is dared by friends to hunt and kill a stray dog called Wolf that has been raiding nearby farms. It costs $7.95.

Christian Peacemaking and International Conflict (Herald Press, 1986) by Duane Friesen is one of the first books to advocate in a sustained way the relevance of a pacifist ethic for international politics. It develops a systematic Christian theological and ethical position on justice and nonviolence in the context of a contemporary political and economic analysis of the human situation. It costs $19.95 ($27.95 in Canada).

John R. Aurelio, a pastor and youth worker in Buffalo, N.Y., has written four books of stories. His latest, **Once Upon a Christmas Time** (Paulist Press, 1986), contains five stories for a family Christmas. It costs $8.95.

The West Coast Mennonite Men's Chorus presented its ninth concert last April in Reedley, Calif. Records and cassettes of the concert are available for $8 (or two for $15) from Ken Elrich, 267 S. Armstrong, Fresno, CA 93727.

The key people, ideas, events and dates of church history are spotlighted in **Chronological and Background Charts of Church History** (Zondervan, 1986) by Robert C. Walton. It costs $8.95.

The Church in the World—Opposition, Tension or Transformation? (Zondervan, 1986) by Robert E. Webber reviews the historical development of church-state relations from New Testament times to the present day, exposing the weaknesses as well as the strengths of church-and-state models. It costs $11.95.

Pulling together the entire range of curricula for children, youth and adults, a **Foundations Series Handbook** is available as a guide for users. It costs $2.95 (U.S.) and may be ordered from Faith and Life Press, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Living as God's Chosen People (Faith and Life Press, 1986), an eight-session study, is another in the series of Faith and Life Bible studies. It costs $4.95.

LETTERS

A heartbreaking situation

The headline "Nine Beauties to Jerusalem" (Sept. 23 editorial) caught our attention since we recently lived there for 10 months. . . . We became keenly aware of the ongoing struggle in the land, where there are two nations, one living under the military occupation of the other, with a virtual situation of apartheid that has gone on for 19 years. The anniversary of that heartbreaking situation was June 5, in the week of the writing of the editorial. And when there are outbursts of despair on the part of these oppressed people who have been stripped of their civil liberties, and whose land is still being confiscated in the name of security by Israel, and the people are left destitute while "appropriate technology" is built on their land in the form of high-rise fortresses, the prevailing Western and Israeli media labels the outcry terrorism.

Christ's words spoken there so long ago before his death and resurrection still carry poignant meaning today: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings and you would not!" The holy places continue to be preserved and venerated by local people and tourists alike, but justice is overlooked. There are peacemakers among both Palestinians and Jews, but their efforts are largely unheeded by government authorities.

The T-shirt slogans and the sounds of the reconnaissance aircraft overhead is a sickening reminder of the billions of dollars annually in monetary and military support that the United States pours into the State of Israel, thereby sharing responsibility for the injustice this perpetuates.

Our disappointment with the editorial is not with the conclusion but with the preamble in the first column; it seems to reinforce the prevailing myths about the land—that there are only two groups of people, the Israelis and the terrorists, and that until the formation of the State of Israel in 1948 there was little advancement or civilization in the land.

Local people would be the first to admit that peacemaking in that land is their own business, but they also readily say that foreigners can help their situation by listening to both sides and relaying that information. *Lillian and Jacob Elias, 602 W. Hively, Elkhart, IN 46517*

Oct. 15

Bernie's response: You may well be right; I didn't try to paint the whole picture. I did not intend to ignore the obvious pains at Jerusalem; my stay was deliberately in an Arab hotel. Unfortunately, I was not aware of the anniversary or I would have mentioned it. I'm glad you added this information.

Informed and involved

The four men were noticeably thin and pale. One had lost over 25 pounds. They had fasted for more than three weeks. They were resolved to fast until death if necessary. They appeared on the Donahue Show. They were fasting to draw attention to the plight of the people in Nicaragua; they wanted us to know that the U.S. government is spending our tax dollars to topple a government elected by over 60 percent of the Nicaraguan voters. They wanted us to know that innocent people were being brutalized and killed in the name of halting the spread of communism in "our" world. More importantly, they contended that U.S. citizens are responsible for the death and brutality because we don't know what's happening—and we don't care.

The four men are probably right. We don't know what's happening in Nicaragua. We don't know what's happening in a lot of places.

In Alvin Toffler's book *Future Shock* he predicted that our world would soon become so overloaded with information that people would walk around in a state of numb shock, unable to assimilate the information available to them, let alone act on it.

In our age of information specialization, Toffler's vision has come to be. We are all so busy keeping up with new information in our special areas of interest that we are unaware of what's happening around us. Four men have taken it upon themselves to shock us out of our state of numb disregard. Their message is clear: We can't let information overload in our world blind us to the human conditions around us.

Maybe their hope is that Toffler's vision is only half-right, that we, despite our information overload in technical and trivial categories, haven't lost the essence of our human condition, haven't become unwilling or unable to care about others. And maybe the four men are right, maybe caring means taking the time to be informed about the human suffering in our world and to react to it. To become involved. To try to alleviate the suffering rather than to worsen it. And maybe, just maybe, caring means to be willing to die. *George Harper, 2428 Wulff Lane, Sacramento, CA 95821*

Oct. 22

Challenged

I found the Goossen, Lehman and anonymous pieces (Oct. 28 issue) substantial and challenging. *Weeden Nichols, 5688 E. Crawford, Salina, KS 67401*

Oct. 26

God is not only male

Janet Janzen's article "A Response to Inclusive Language" (Oct. 14 issue) left me sad and disappointed. Though Janzen reluctantly agreed to the use of inclusive language when referring to people, she drew the line at referring to God as anything but male. If we examine the entire body of imagery for God in the Bible, we also find references to God in terms that can only be female, e.g. a mother caring for her young.

The richness and depth of imagery associated with God needs to be reflected in the language used to depict God. In using only male words we neglect to project the fullness of God's relationship with us. *Becky Kaufman, Stouffer Place 27-11, Lawrence, KS 66044*

Oct. 31

Freedom to serve

The first freedom the church needs to pursue is the freedom to serve its Lord in all kinds of political situations without being co-opted by communists, capitalists or democrats. From time to time it may have to resist any or all of them; at times it may have to work with any or all of them. The church is not a political party. It is a community of faith winding its way through an imperfect and sinful world to serve God's children, even—and most particularly—when that means getting its hands dirty. *Edward M. Huenemann, Wichita, Kan.*

Nov. 4

Conformity to $5 suits and garage sales?

Maria Siemens Matty

In one of our lifestyle discussions, a member of our house fellowship suggested that we buy more used or secondhand items. We would then be better stewards financially and ecologically. My husband, Tom, and I have put this suggestion into practice. This enables us to give more and do more with less.

Tom is not keen on wearing the latest three-piece suit topped off with a tie, even if only to a Sunday morning worship service. He feels much more "echt" in a shirt, slacks and maybe a sweater. Yet when the "price is right," why not go for it?

So at a neighborhood garage sale we had the opportunity to purchase a pinstriped navy three-piece suit for $5. I altered it a bit to fit his form, and it also enhanced his "image of God."

Tom was apprehensive about wearing it in public. What would friends and neighbors say if he wore the suit to church? Why was he wearing it in the first place? Was it to live up to their expectations? Was he inadvertently poking fun at their more expensive lifestyle by donning one of their kind of suit, yet at a different cost? Was he trying to be all things to all people?

When he finally wore the suit he heard comments like, "Did you get a raise?" "Have you changed your radical way of thinking?" "You actually look quite handsome."

That evening I realized that living in a consumeristic and "throwaway" society also gives us the opportunity to purchase this type of suit for $5. If the price had not been "right" we would not have bought it. Yet if someone had not paid the original new price for the top quality suit, discarded it and made it available for others to purchase again, Tom would not have had the opportunity to wear it.

So even if we believe in living with less, we are still using and taking advantage of our consumer-oriented society by wearing the hand-me-downs of those who live with more. Ironically, even if we were doing with "less" by purchasing used items, we were actually doing with "more" since the suit was neither a necessity nor a desire in our lives.

From another perspective, we could actually be encouraging others to continue to buy newer and more fashionable clothing or furniture just because we took their old or used possessions off their hands. That causes the consumption cycle to continue, even if not directly contributing to it. If I know that my good used coat will not be used by anyone else (not even in Third World countries) and will be thrown away, burned or buried, I'll think twice about buying a new one. I'll feel guilty about waste or of being a pack rat. However, since I can bring it to a thrift shop or sell it at a garage sale, I can justify my actions by saying, "Well, others will be using it so it is all right to buy a new one for myself." I have actually conned myself into believing that I have not wasted anything.

Somehow our consumerism has infiltrated our concepts of charity as well. We excuse spending on ourselves by saying someone else is benefiting from it. In other words, our charity becomes "secondhand" rather than being "first fruits." This type of action consumes not only more natural resources but also more time in organization. Sure, we might be creating more jobs, but is it at the expense of our environment, energy and time?

As I ponder Christian responsibility, Christ's words come to me: "If you have two coats and he has none, then give him one." Jesus did not say, "Go buy a new one first, then give him your old one." Nor did he say, "Justify buying a new one because you gave him your second one." I believe that if this were an option for us, the scriptural principle would have been, "If you need to have two coats in your society, buy your neighbor a new coat and keep your used one."

The Mennonite community, which in European-Anabaptist history stood for the "simple lifestyle," has become part of this consumer-oriented society in North America. I have seen too many good three-piece suits at Mennonite garage sales or at auction/relief sales. There is too much good-quality clothing available in thrift shops. A high percentage of the donators are Mennonites.

Why do we discard our good clothes? Is it to buy newer or more fashionable or more color-coordinated items? Is it because we have cut down our food consumption, lost weight and now require clothes that fit better? Is it to help clothe the naked? It would be more humane to clothe the naked with something new rather than with something no longer "good enough for me."

Yet after all these questions and answers, I feel positive about thrift shops. Many customers bring in outgrown children's clothing and purchase larger items in the same store. I have observed quite a bit of turnover in maternity and postpartum mother's clothing. Disposals of estates also bring in good quality items. Some customers can retain their self-esteem by being able to afford their needs instead of having to beg or depend on free handouts.

I find it easier to live simply in these times of economic recession and environmental awareness than it was in my teenage years. Now it is even acceptable to my peers. Yet this *nonconformity* to luxurious living might itself be *conforming* to the world if that is what the world expects of me. For when I do things to be accepted by people rather than by God, I am tampering with conformity. Even a status quo church community can tempt us to wear suits and styles it finds acceptable, at the risk of forgetting to seek God's approval.

Only when Christ has renewed my mind so that my desire is to please God will I be truly motivated to do things acceptable to him rather than to people or to myself.

This twist in affairs brings me back to the introduction as well as to the conclusion. Why then did we buy the $5 suit and why did Tom wear it? Our conclusions led us to new beginnings. Simple or responsible living is not so simple anymore. We need to ask a lot more questions even if we get caught in a tailspin of unanswered ones. By asking them, others might be answered. New issues might arise that also need to be addressed. I hope our lifestyles will no longer be taken for granted but chosen—even if it is a slow, questioning process.

Writer Maria Siemens Matty lives at 3042 Tims St., Clearbrook, BC V2T 4G8.

Thank God for the chuckhole

Richard C. Ziemer

In July 1985, as our family drove north, returning from a short vacation in Florida, we came to a traffic obstruction on Route I-95 in North Carolina. An excavated section of one of the northbound lanes about three feet square had become a temporary resting place for the wheels of a modular house that was being moved northward. Traffic was stopped; we were about 10 vehicles behind that obstruction and stopped in line with the car running and the air conditioning working to keep us cool as we sweated out this wait.

Several cars in front of us made U-turns and went back the mile to the previous crossover to circumvent this trouble. My wife, Adelle, who was driving, said, "I smell gasoline." I tried to believe that the smell came from a truck or another car in front of us. But when I got out of the car to check the grassy medial strip to locate the best place to cross over, I looked under the engine area of the car and saw fluid squirting from our car onto the hot asphalt.

"Let's get back to that truck stop immediately," I said, and our U-turn took us back to the garage area of the truck stop only to learn that those mechanics worked only on trucks, not cars. With the car ignition shut off, I located my black sticky tape and performed my own dirty work of patching by wrapping the friction tape around the fuel line hose which had the rupture in it. When I learned how to get to the auto garage, we drove there right away and waited for our turn.

Being a garage in a small town on a less-traveled road made the area less crowded. Six inches of black hose worth $1.50 made the repair complete and by 1 p.m. we were on our way happy that no fire had occurred.

While we were making such good time driving that morning, it was frustrating to have our trip interrupted, but we did not have a deadline to meet, the trouble could not have happened at a more convenient time and we were reminded of the Lord's care for us in that experience.

Richard C. Ziemer is pastor at Eden Mennonite Church, Schwenksville, PA 19473.

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And trust in the Lord (Psalm 4:5)

Trudy Voth

It is a sacrifice
    to trust in the Lord,
It is a sacrifice of human wisdom
    with its logic,
        insight
        and foresight,
—all rational,
but all limited.

It is a sacrifice of pride
    that cleaves to one's own conclusions
    over and against God's conclusions
no matter how often his
have proven wiser and better.

It is a sacrifice
Yet a worthy sacrifice
    to trust in the Lord.
There is peace
    in the guidance
of him who knows all.

The poet is manager of the bookstore at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

EDITORIAL

Severing the unbiblical cord

Giving thanks to God can be complicated. I find this to be true especially when I am thanking God for having all that I need—even plenty, even an abundance.

I have sat at many a "thanksgiving table" laden with good food and thanked God—and it is right and fitting so to do. But I am often uncomfortable with my thanksgiving prayers. They are, I'm afraid, connected to the North American culture that surrounds me. My prayers of thanks are just a bit like, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not like others. . ." (Luke 18:11), that I am not as unfortunate as others.

Here are three cultural beliefs that our society comes dangerously close to associating with Christian beliefs. These unbiblical ideas can keep me from experiencing and acting on the freeing, saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Staying connected to them keeps me from Christian maturity. They are sayings that help the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. They complicate my thanksgiving prayers.

First: "God helps those who help themselves." It's not in the Bible. (Benjamin Franklin is said to have originated this saying.) Now I'm all for rejoicing with those who rejoice as long as I am just as accessible to weep with those who weep. Like most sayings, there is some truth in this one but also a great blind spot. Does God not help those who don't or can't help themselves?

Wars are currently taking civilian casualties in 43 countries. These victims of economic and ideological conflict are caught in the crossfire. They are helpless to remedy their situation. Yet out of the chaos they report changing their prayers from "God, please keep us safe" to "God, please keep us faithful to you." I want to pray like that.

Second: "If you are a good Christian you will be successful in the eyes of the world." It's not in the Bible. Many of us come from forebears who worked hard and lived right, and it was nearly impossible for them not to become materially successful. But as they or we become relatively wealthy, our prayers of thanksgiving get complicated. They get complicated when we recall that Western wealth is made possible by non-Western poverty. My colleague Gordon Houser has a T-shirt that carries the slogan "Live simply that others may simply live." I want to live like that.

Connecting worldly success to Christianity is only a half step from saying that God's back is turned on us when we fail. In contrast, "Lo, I am with you always," Jesus tells us in Matthew, and, "Come to me all ye who . . . are heavy laden." I have a problem with the television and radio religious programs that come close to guaranteeing worldly success instead of reminding us of Jesus' death and resurrection, programs that portray materialism rather than the Suffering Servant that they claim to represent.

Third: "Charity begins at home." It's not in the Bible. While it is true that we need to and want to "take care of our own," it is also true that mission outside ourselves binds us together and even makes us more able to care for our own. The more we give in discipleship and obedience, the more we receive. And isn't that part of Jesus' teaching about saving and losing? Two weeks ago at the Western District Conference I heard Walter Brueggeman say that the most radical statement of all time is that of Jesus: "Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

A church that is warring within itself is often a church that needs to renew its mission. Commitment to mission—to charity away from home—can free up our willingness to confess and forgive and be forgiven. Sending, ordaining, commissioning, empowering congregations are generally unified congregations. (Notice: not agreeing; unity is a cut above agreement and way above uniformity.) Charity begins at home, but obedience to Jesus immediately takes it into the world.

As we are able to separate ourselves from a suffocating, materialistic culture, we will mature into "the wholeness of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

As we sever whatever ties us to culture-flaunted-as-religion, our ministry to a needy world will grow. Let us pray, "Thy kingdom come" with hearts full of thanksgiving—and let us grow. *mts*

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:23 DECEMBER 9, 1986

A fragile, single flame lights the darkness. We await the birthday of a baby who brought God's light to the world.

PROLOGUE

Some call it coincidence; I call it God. You see, when the articles for this issue came together (some from the files, others from the daily mail), a theme emerged: the strength of weakness.

Robert Bartel ("Jesus Confronts Us with Christmas") turns up the rheostat—as it were—on Gary Harder's introduction of the children. And then the circle comes back around. Having been with Jesus, we are enabled and empowered to confront the powers of the world. Thus Gary can inspire us to speak to the "kings" who need to hear us.

What better way to celebrate Advent than to treasure anew the little ones—the weakest ones—among us. From our children—not from power plays—come our best ideas for celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.

As our Spanish-speaking friends say at a time like this, a time of things coming together, "Gloria a Dios." *mts*

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THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

Business manager: Dietrich Rempel. Circulation secretary: Marilyn Kaufman. Special editions editors: Central District, Evelyn Krehbiel, 229 Brookwood, Bluffton, OH 45817; Pacific District, Carol Peterson, 25956 S. Rhoten Road, Aurora, OR 97002; Western District, Debbie Huxman, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; Window to Mission, Lois Deckert, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Richard A. Kauffman, 3003 Benham Ave. Elkhart, IN 46517.

The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**

A letter to a king

Weeping for the children

Gary Harder

Dear King Herod,

This week I've read and reread your story in the New Testament. You see, we Christians are getting ready to celebrate the birthday of Jesus--yes, the same Jesus you tried to kill almost 2,000 years ago while you were king. Does it surprise you that we still remember that birth? Your kingdom has long since disappeared, turned to dust, while his is still growing. OK, I won't rub it in.

But reading about you in Matthew's account still makes my blood boil. You know, how you tried to trick the wise men. That one sort of backfired on you, didn't it? But the story that I can't deal with is the one of you killing all those babies. It sickens me—all the male babies 2 years old and younger in Bethlehem; a river of blood on your conscience. I've tried to understand the desperation that drove you, your absolute terror of being replaced as king. Others have told us that you shed a lot of blood in order to keep your throne and that a few more babies really meant nothing to you. Yes, we know about your brutal ruthlessness. We know about your assassinations of political opponents. We know about your informers and secret police. We know that you even killed three of your own sons when you got suspicious of their loyalty. We know that you killed one of your wives in order to feel a bit more secure.

And you tried to kill Jesus, a helpless baby. What did you see in this little baby lying in a manger that had the power to drive you almost out of your mind with fear? You somehow sensed his power, didn't you? For that little cradle rocked the world. It sent fear surging up through all the power structures. It made you and others after you mad with fear and jealousy.

Let me tell you that the power you sensed was real. I'm not surprised that you felt threatened. Jesus still threatens people. Me too, many times. I still can't understand or explain the incredible power his love has, a love that can and does save the world. A love that keeps challenging our feeble attempts at power, at holding onto thrones, at building personal kingdoms here on

earth, at arming the world to the teeth, at ignoring dying children all over the world today because they don't count enough in our power schemes.

Actually the reason I'm writing you this Christmas letter is that I'm still so troubled by all those babies you killed. But I'm equally troubled about how we treat babies and children today. I don't think our world counts children for much either.

We say that Christmas is a time for children. We celebrate the birth of Jesus and make it a time for kids. We've invented a nice fat man called Santa Claus. We give lots of presents to children. And we have nice little programs for them and with them. All the children get terribly excited during the Christmas season—unmanageable, really. On the surface Christmas is a great time for children. On the surface we really love children. But I sometimes wonder if we are much different than you were, Herod. We don't actually go out and kill babies like you did, go out in the streets and dash their heads in—though we do suck their brains out if they happen to be unwanted and still in the womb. And every minute in our world about 30 children die of malnutrition and disease, while every minute our kings spend $1.5 million on more weapons. I guess we really don't care much about the children who are dying.

We're also learning a lot about child abuse and incest these days. I guess you would know all that, wouldn't you, Herod? What drove you to kill your own children? Lots of parents do that today too. They beat them, burn them, constantly run them down, ignore them, neglect them, abandon them or pamper them. If they don't kill their bodies, they kill their spirits. Our papers are full of that these days.

You should see the toys that are on the market this Christmas, Herod. You'd love them. Mostly war toys: soldiers, tanks, guns, space weapons. It's as if we adults are pushing our problems onto our children. The toys are just one more part of our anti-children crusade. We make toys not to help children enjoy play but to fill our pocketbooks. And we parents fall for that and buy it. Again our children are exploited and abused and corrupted.

I weep for the children of the world, Herod. I weep for the children we have sold into materialism. They worship that god only because we adults do, trying desperately to keep up with or exceed our friends in the good life, in the best brand names, the newest fashions, the latest comforts. The newest fashions—that's a good one. Why else create new fashions every other week except to sell more? And we—suckers all—fall for it to be "mod" and "in."

I weep for the children who have become captured by the forces of evil today: those on drugs, on alcohol, on cigarettes. They've all become slaves—those who are homeless because they have no deep roots in a family or in a faith, those who have made deceit and dishonesty and manipulation a way of life to ease their daily living, those who are absorbed by cheap sex, those who cannot respect their parents and those who turn their backs on God. All of these things the adult world is responsible for. Our children think they have discovered them while all the time they are simply pawns lured into a trap.

When Matthew wrote your story, Herod, he couldn't help remembering what Jeremiah wrote: "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are not." Ramah, the place where Rachel was buried. Rachel, Jacob's wife. When the sons and daughters of Judah were led captive in chains to Babylon 800 years later, they passed by Ramah and the cry went up, "Rachel is weeping for her children whom she sees going into captivity."

But Jeremiah tells them to stop crying. "Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears. . . . They shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future, says the Lord" (Jeremiah 31:15ff).

So you see, we don't weep in despair, Herod. You did not succeed. You couldn't kill all the babies. You never can. No one ever can, unless the bomb annihilates us all.

And this Jesus, when he grew up, loved children and defended children and stood with them against the world. In your world, which was even more anti-child than is our world, Jesus dared to affirm and give dignity to children. He said that children were of the essence of the kingdom of God and that adults should even become like a child in order to participate in it. He said that it would be better for us adults to hang a millstone around our necks and drown ourselves rather than even hurt a little one. He chastised even his disciples for thinking that children shouldn't bother their master. "No, let them come to me." It is very simple. God is for children.

We still follow this Jesus, Herod. And so we are for children. We will do everything in our power to thwart your kind, to stand in your way. We will protect the ones you would hurt, be *for* children in an anti-child world, confront all the exploiters of children.

During this Christmas season, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we will go beyond the commercialism, the excesses, the music, the exploitation. We will tell our children the story of Jesus—yes, including your part of the story, Herod. And we will tell the meaning of that story. We will talk about God loving all of us so much that Jesus came to live among us. We will talk about simplicity and compassion and sharing. We will talk about love and of how love is so much stronger than violence and armies and fear. And we will recommit ourselves to love our children, all the children of the church, all the children of the world.

So please, Herod, no more dead babies. Not Bethlehem babies nor Lebanese babies nor Salvadoran babies nor Afghan babies nor Canadian babies. You can't win anyway, you know. No one can ever kill all the babies. God is on their side.

I still weep sometimes for children because there are too many of your sort in our world, Herod. But sometimes mine become tears of hope and joy when I remember the birth of Jesus.

Sincerely,
A 20th-century pastor

Gary Harder is pastor at Faith Church in Edmonton. His address is 3508-78 St., Edmonton, AB T6K 0E9.

Paradox

Linea Reimer Geiser

Give thanks to the God of gods
Give thanks to the Lord of lords

For God's power
For God's glory

Bow before the Holy One
who dwells in blinding light

Worship the Sovereign
who reigns with justice

And comes to us
stripped
a newborn
Emmanuel

Preparation

Linea Reimer Geiser

He's coming
He's coming
Put on the purple of penitence
Line the pathway with
the purple of royalty
Wash your lives
Clear the deep center
He's coming

The Defenseless Child
The Suffering Servant
The Shalom of God

Buy less and give more

Betty Mae Dyck

Jesus came to set us free. It seems to me that in our continent Christmas is a season of bondage. The feelings of being trapped into unworthily spending money and time gnaw at us. The truth of having our budgets stretched and snapped stings well into the new year.

How can believers be humble yet creative role models celebrating joyful more-with-less Christmases? How can we be rested people in a frenzied world? How can we demonstrate that we are "called people" instead of "driven ones"? We need to examine why this season too often ends up being a time of piling up sin instead of re-creative celebrating.

Unhappily, "hurry" characterizes our lives for much of November and all of December. We feel fragmented. Our attentions are being demanded by a crowd of voices: gifts to buy for so many people, special cooking and baking, parties and programs to attend and new clothes to be bought or sewn. The list gets longer as mailing deadlines and Dec. 25 approach. One has to be a time-and-money management specialist to even begin to try to cope with it all.

Our God is the only source of quietness and wisdom in the bewildering North American cultural expectations we are caught in this season. Regular, daily, longer-than-usual prayer times are a must. Praying over your guest and gift lists is absolutely necessary. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you your motives for inviting people and giving gifts. Are you motivated by pride instead of sacrificial love? Do you feel resentment that your extended family keeps going along with everyone else because you lack the courage to speak up against some worn-out or wasteful custom?

Are you guilty of trying to buy someone's friendship through the gift you select? Are you forced into spending far more than you should for your kids

because you want them to feel accepted by their peers when they brag about all the loot they collected? These tough questions can only be faced through honest prayer. When the answers get sorted out, rejoice that the fruits of the Holy Spirit are peace, patience, love, joy and hope. Our Creator is the source of all beauty and creativity. He will give you ideas on how to "buy less and give more."

Here are a few ideas God has given me over the years.

The gift of prayer. It was a young Filipina university student who first gave me this gift. A touching note stated, ". . . Ate (Elder Sister) Mae, I can't give you any *thing* this Christmas that you don't already have. I know you have many needs that only prayer can meet. Please send me your specific prayer requests every week so I can pray for you all through this year. Love, Edna." Are there people who need to receive this gift from you this year?

The gift of time. Dona gives hours of house-cleaning time to our pastor's wife each year. Her cheerful, competent help releases the recipient to redemptively use that time elsewhere.

Grandma Oliver has given a harried young mother the gift of doing four hours of mending each month for a year.

Verena gives the promise of a loaf of homemade bread each time she bakes to an elderly widow living alone.

Janet gives reading time. She reads the headlines and favorite columns in the local newspaper to an almost-blind, 90-year-old person over the phone several times a week.

Do you know of a young couple who would be delighted with a few free evenings of babysitting this year?

Make your gifts instead of buying them. Since we live in the Okanagan Valley with its orchards heavy with fruit, we dry hundreds of pounds each summer to send to friends. Another family we know has a rule that in their Christmas box every gift must be handmade and the materials not cost more than $5. What creativity blossoms each year as driftwood is carved and linens are hand-embroidered.

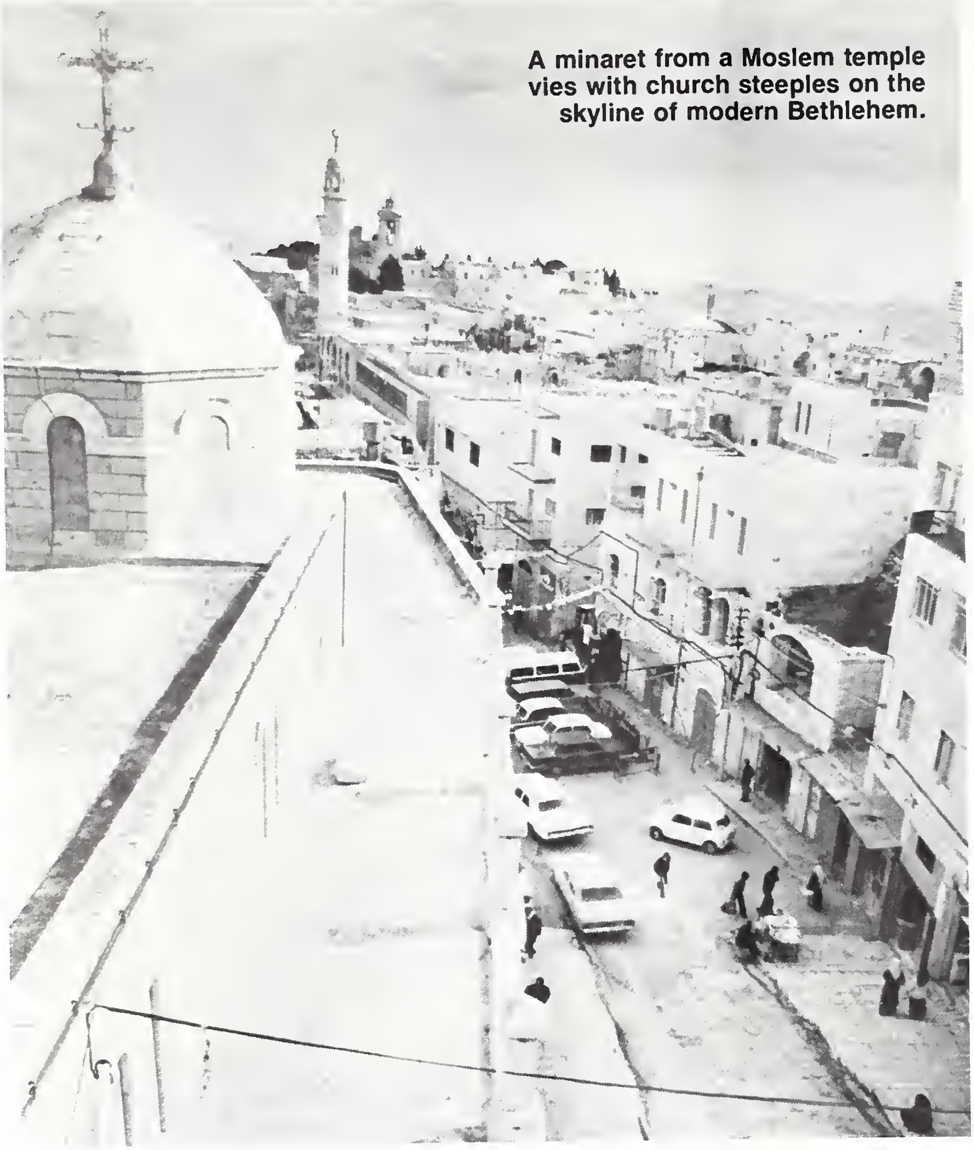
The gift of history. If you are over the half-century mark, you can do this. You have lived in times that your grandchildren or nieces and nephews have little knowledge of. Use a tape recorder and tell them some of the stories of God's faithfulness to you when you were a teenager. Get the tapes duplicated and mail them out. Or tell a story tailored to each person's need.

If buy you must, choose your gifts prayerfully. Will your gift build up the person who receives it? Is there a tense person of German extraction who would benefit immensely from the belly laughs that a Low German recording would evoke? Is there a shy young girl feeling like an ugly duckling who would feel more beautiful if you bought her that angora azure-blue toque to match the color of her eyes?

In our family we mostly give books. These are bought throughout the year and stashed away on a special shelf. It certainly simplifies the shopping, and I never begrudge money spent in bookstores.

God gave Jesus—not a commercial gift but incredibly costly. It's his birthday. Let's simplify and sanctify our Christmas this year by buying less and giving more.

Betty Mae Dyck lives at 1225 Debeck Road, Penticton, BC V2A 3Z3.



A minaret from a Moslem temple vies with church steeples on the skyline of modern Bethlehem.

Bethlehem,

a holy city

Marlow Ediger

Bethlehem is located approximately five miles south of the walled city of old Jerusalem. The land is hilly surrounding Bethlehem. It's a city set on a hill.

Numerous caves are along the five-mile distance from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. These were probably used by shepherds to shelter and house sheep during the winter months. Near the Church of the Nativity are the fields of Boaz and Ruth, from whose lineage King David was born. David as a boy was a shepherd near Bethlehem.

During the days of the Crusades, the Crusaders in A.D. 1099 captured Bethlehem. In 1100 Baldwin I was crowned King of Jerusalem in Bethlehem. Here, in the area of the present-day Church of the Nativity, the announcement of the birth of Christ occurred according to the Crusaders.

Justin Martyr identified the manger site during the second century. Queen Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, had a church built in 326 over the stable where Christ was to have been born. This church building was destroyed, and Emperor Justinian had the Church of the Nativity rebuilt in 540. The Church of the Nativity, as built by Emperor Justinian, still stands today. It is probably the oldest church on earth.

There have been many disagreements over the centuries as to which Christian faith(s) should rule this church. Presently, it is ruled by the Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. Candles are lit above the grotto or manger area by representatives of these three religious faiths only.

A 14-point silver star marks the exact spot of the birth of Christ. The theft of the silver star was one factor that led to the Crimean War of 1854-56. This silver star contains the inscription, "Here of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ was born" (English translation of "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus Est").

In 1917, during World War I, Great Britain captured Bethlehem ("house of bread") from the Ottoman Turks, who had controlled all of the land of Palestine since 1517. After the United Nations in 1947 divided the land of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state, four wars were fought over this land in the following year. The West Bank of the Jordan, which included the cities of Old Jerusalem, Hebron and Bethlehem, became a part of the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan. In 1967 the six-day war was fought between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan, Syria and Egypt. Israel captured the West Bank.

Bethlehem has a population today of approximately 28,000 Palestinian Christians and a small number of the Armenian Orthodox faith. Bethlehem has a long history of violence and the concept of peace is beyond its grasp.

The Middle East is a troubled area of the world. The city of Bethlehem, located on the West Bank, is a contested city between Israel and the Palestinian Arabs. No doubt it will take a long time for Phillips Brooks' (1868) dream of "Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie" to come true. Let us pray for the peace of the Holy Land.

Marlow Ediger is a professor in the division of education at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, MO 63501.

Jesus confronts us with Christmas

Robert Bartel

Jesus' coming was foretold by the prophets. When the wise men came to Herod, the scholars read Micah and sent them to Bethlehem.

Micah wrote his prophecy during the time of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Like the other prophets of the Old Testament, Micah was pastoral, confrontational and hopeful. Micah was concerned by the abuse of power by the rich elite of Judah and how they made the plight of the poor impossible to bear with their cheating in business, their land-grabbing and their violation of human rights. To confront the wealthy and the powerful with their sins of abuse of that power was a dangerous position for Micah to take (see Micah 2:1-2; 3:1-3, 8-11).

The solution to the evils of Judaen society was not more worship on the Sabbath. The solution was not more sacrifice (Micah 6:6-13).

The hope Micah saw for Judah was in the Man of Peace who would come from Bethlehem and in the hope that arises from God's unchanging love and forgiveness (Micah 4:1-4; 5:1-5; 7:18-20). The solution to the abuse of power by the wealthy and the human rights violations was the Man of Peace.

When Jesus finally arrived, the situation had not changed much. King Herod was a ruthless man, the representative of Rome who had informers and secret police everywhere. Using accusations of disloyalty, he killed three of his sons, one of his wives and any number of close advisers.

Jesus was born into a world of hate and death. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the Son of God of love, was born in a manger in Bethlehem. The response of the world to the confrontation of the Baby was deception, hate, death and human rights violations. Herod sought to destroy love, hope and peace through hate, despair and death. Jesus and his parents became refugees.

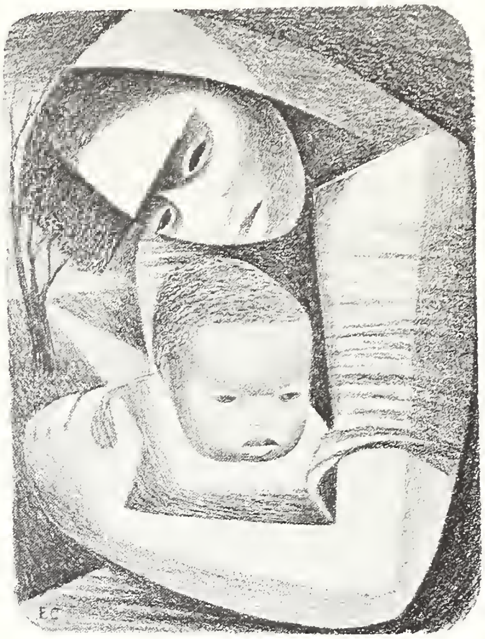
To preserve the beauty of Christmas, we stop the story of the wise men at the end of Matthew 2:12 with the wise men going home another way. To keep Christmas beautiful, we don't want to proceed to the end of the chapter. The sorrow of the mothers of Bethlehem has always bothered me. To assume fatalistically that the children died in Bethlehem only to fulfill prophecy nullifies Christ's peaceful mission. Couldn't the star have gone straight to Bethlehem and avoided contact with the evil King Herod? Surely God could and should have spared the parents of Bethlehem their grief.

The answer, I believe, is in the confrontational nature of God's message. As in the stories of the Old Testament prophets, in order to care for those underprivileged and to provide them with hope, the worldly powers of evil must be confronted with God's message of love and peace. When that confrontation occurs, the world responds in the only way it knows, with death, despair and human rights violations.

Confronting the world with love and peace was dangerous. The price was severe. Today is the same. The powers of evil still reign. The price of confrontation is still dear. The price of confronting the human rights abuses of the Soviet Union means imprisonment, labor camps and internal exile. The price of denouncing apartheid in South Africa means imprisonment and death. In the United States, to show compassion and love to the refugees of Guatemala and El Salvador or to trespass on military property means imprisonment and fines. In Chile, Guatemala and El Salvador, the Mothers of the Disappeared still weep.

In order to care for those underprivileged and to provide them with hope, the worldly powers of evil must be confronted with God's message of love and peace.

The world of power could not accept the Child of Peace, but neither could the religious community of that day. The church of today also often does not hear the message of Christmas. "Peace" for us is more like being able to relax uninterrupted on Christmas Day. "Goodwill" is more like putting a few dollars into the Salvation Army kettle, without a commitment to change the structures that make people poor. We bask in the "glory that shone around" and find it hard to confront the world with the compassion of God's love, with the power of God's glory.



God entrusted his Christmas message of peace and goodwill to shepherds. God granted the understanding of the Messiah to "foreigners." God blessed Mary, a pregnant teenager, with the revelation of his Son's message (Luke 1:46-55).

When we understand the Christmas message of "Peace on earth, goodwill to all," Christmas is never over. It is a full-time job to confront the powerful.

"Peace" and "goodwill" involve risk-taking, but in the Christmas message lies the only hope we and the world have. The world desperately needs us this Christmas to not merely internalize the beauty of the season but to reach out to others, not just to ask for a cease-fire but to press for peace. May Jesus, the refugee, grant us his peace in order to face the necessary risks. For through absurdity God creates reality, through weakness God creates power and through death God creates life and hope.

Robert Bartel, former dean of boys at Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College, is now a representative in Labrador for Mennonite Central Committee Canada. His address is Box 850, Station B, Happy Valley, Labrador, A0P 1E0.

Canada's major churches have announced plans for the celebration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Jan. 18-25, 1987. As this year's theme an interchurch planning group has chosen "Christ Our Reconciliation." Central to the Week of Prayer are ecumenical services held across Canada. Participating in the production of materials were the Anglican, Baptist, Christian Church (Disciples), Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army and United Church.

"To be spiritual is to be distinctively human," declared Susan Muto, this year's speaker at the eighth annual J. J. Thiessen lectures at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg Oct. 21-22. Muto's four lectures explored the topic "Christian Spirituality and Everyday Living: A Practical Approach to Faith Formation." Muto, director of the Institute of Formative Spirituality in Pittsburgh, described spirituality not as a form of emotional high nor as a withdrawal from our work in the world but as "a splendid rhythm of labor and leisure, prayer and production," all within the presence of God.

NEWS

Future ties discussed

MC/GC home ministries groups meet

Elkhart, Ind. (MBM/GCMC)—The first meeting of the home ministries staff and committee/commission members of the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church occurred here Oct. 31.

About 50 people related to the Home Ministries Divisional Committee of Mennonite Board of Missions (MC) and the Commission on Home Ministries (GC) gathered for six hours in the fellowship hall of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries to review current forms of cooperation and to project future direction.

The first part of the historic meeting consisted of reports about cooperative efforts in the areas of media, short-term service, voluntary service, health and welfare, deaf ministries, students and young adults, peace and justice, and ethnic ministries. Rick Stiffney, staff person for HMDC, and Stan Bohn, staff person for CHM, spoke about long-term vision for home ministries and noted similarities in denominational goals and priorities.

"Nearly everyone present feels positive about our relations and cooperative efforts," summarized James Metzler, HMDC chairperson. "Some caution was shared, however, about implications and complications involved in future cooperation. Some people noted that our broader structures don't mesh. Others pointed out that the grass-roots movement toward cooperation is moving faster than the structures. Some wondered what oneness and bigness would mean when both denominations are moving in the opposite direction toward a district and local focus. And still others are fearful because of past history."

"The group also agreed," Metzler said, "that we should work together where it's beneficial and increase cooperation in special areas, like evangelism and church development."

Dorothy Nickel Friesen, CHM chairperson, echoed the commitment to work together. "We need to strengthen the positive aspects of cooperation and eliminate or reduce the conflicts and disagreements."

HMDC member Ike Glick said, "It's not likely the structures that separate us will help bring us together. We need to find other ways to remove the roadblocks." HMDC member John Eby said, "The challenge is finding the best way to deliver quality services to the grass roots."

One of the hurdles for merger of programs such as evangelism and church development is where to locate the office, if not in Elkhart or Newton. CHM staff person Don Yoder noted that it would be ideal to locate the office in an urban area.

One of the other hurdles—the historic differences between the two groups—was alluded to at various points during the meeting. But Lynn Liechty, CHM member, noted that no one in the group was present when the original split occurred. "The problem today is that we are perpetuating it. It's up to us to destroy the barriers and take down the walls." Fellow CHM member Mark Winslow added that the issues that originally resulted in the split no longer exist.

CHM staff member Alberto Quintela described the current home ministries cooperation as a courtship. "We need to have some celebration and joy about what has already happened. If we don't, maybe we need some premarital counseling."

CHM member Leonard Wiebe pointed out that the vision for both Mennonite groups is similar. "The number one priority of the General Conference development plan is evangelism and church planting," he underlined. "That is so close in vision to the 10-year goals of the Mennonite Church."

The group encouraged ongoing cooperation and joint meetings at several home ministries levels. Some, like HMDC staff person Ray Horst, felt a joint agenda would be important.

Metzler called the meeting a clear milestone. "We have been clearly hopeful and cautiously realistic with a sense of joy and celebration. We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go." *Phil Richard*

Dorothy Nickel Friesen (center), CHM chairperson, makes a point during the joint home ministries meeting of the Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches. Also pictured are Gwen Preheim-Bartel (MC), James Metzler (MC), Stan Bohn (GC) and Ivorie Lowe (GC).

In a recent interview with Religious News Service, Will D. Campbell, author, activist, farmer and minister, offered a pithy and pungent explanation of why, although he is a Baptist preacher who works in the South, he is no longer a Southern Baptist: "Historically all us Baptists came from that left-wing group of radicals at the time of the Reformation—the Anabaptists. They believed in the complete separation of church and state. They would not go to war; they were against the death penalty. Southern Baptists have forgotten all that. They spend more time blow drying their hair than wrestling with their history."

"Who Are the Mennonites?" has been published in Spanish. Hector Valencia, General Conference missionary in Bogotá, Colombia, and director of the department of publications of the Evangelical Mennonite Churches of Colombia, has rewritten the pamphlet in Spanish. The new pamphlet focuses on the history of the Mennonites in the world with a closer look at Colombian church developments as well as explaining the Mennonite distinctives.

"I planted a tree," a new Mennonite Central Committee giving project, raises money for MCC's forestry programs in countries including Nigeria, Bangladesh, Lebanon and Haiti. Contact Meribeth Sprunger Kraybill at MCC, Box M, Akron, PA 17501.

Conference empowers Mennonite women for active ministry

Elkhart, Ind. (AMBS)—A clown, a mime and an opera singer braiding together many-hued ribbons of cloth in a liturgical banner, symbolizing the interweaving of women's lives with God and one another formed one part of the rich tapestry of sensory images in the closing worship of the Women in Ministry conference held here Oct. 24-25.

The eighth Women in Ministry conference, hosted this year by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, drew 164 registrants from the area and from locations as distant as Manitoba, Texas, Virginia, Florida, Pennsylvania, Oregon and Ontario.

Conference sessions developed the theme "Women Empowered for Action" through the use of many creative worship elements. Speaker June Alliman Yoder, AMBS faculty member, worship leader Charlotte Holsopple Glick, copastor of Waterford Mennonite Church, and music leader Cynthia Neufeld, an AMBS student, made up the leadership team.

Focusing on the theme "Silence" in her opening address, Yoder spoke for many in observing, "We have an awkward relationship with silence; it attracts us and repels us. We are so accustomed to studying words that we neglect to study the silences." She invited participants to disconnect and get disentangled from busy schedules in order to be still and wait for God's empowerment to come through silence.

I hope these conferences can lead us to action. I think there is optimism and power among women. We heard another story of disobedience this morning (midwives in Exodus 1). Why are we so fearful? *Hedy Sawadsky, Amarillo, Texas*

There are still too few spaces where there is inclusive worship and equal opportunities for women. *Gayle Gerber Koontz, Elkhart, Ind.*

We need to make more effort to use the structures that already exist, such as Women in Mission. *Michelle Friesen-Carper*

In her second address Yoder spoke of the empowering that comes through "Whispering" as women quietly encourage one another to acts of courage and faithfulness. She named Shiprah and Puah, Hebrew midwives in the time of Moses, Naomi and Ruth, and Mary and Elizabeth as biblical models of women whose supportive whispers to one another set great saving acts of God in motion. Participants drew together in small groups to identify women whose whispers had been sources of empowerment.

The final conference session, culminating in the theme "Shouting," provided a platform for women to proclaim the good news through poetry, music and dramatic sketches on biblical and peacemaking themes. The worship time concluded with a communion celebration and many warm embraces.

Participants chose two workshops to attend out of 20 diverse offerings touching upon women's issues in a variety of professions, including the pastoral ministry. A series of workshops addressed the needs of women in young adulthood, midlife and after 50.

The first Women in Ministry conference, held in 1976 in Lombard, Ill., grew out of Lombard Mennonite Church's desire to provide a support group for its co-pastor Emma Richards at a time when there were not very many ordained women pastors in the Mennonite Church.

Worship at Women in Ministry conference

Since 1976 the conference has been held almost annually on an ad hoc, inter-Mennonite basis, with local grass-roots committees taking turns hosting it in different parts of the United States and Canada. The conferences draw repeat participants as well as newcomers.

This year's participants were vocal in affirming the continuing usefulness of such an inter-Mennonite women's forum. "We still have many frontiers to work on. There are many denominational conferences that don't permit women to preach, be ordained or vote," a Canadian woman remarked.

After discussing the value of tying the conference into the structure of already existing women's organizations within the General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite churches, participants affirmed forming a committee that would include representatives from the Women's Missionary and Service Commission, Women in Mission, the MCC Committee on Women's Concerns, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and the 1986 planning committee to take responsibility for finding a host community to sponsor the next Women in Ministry conference. *Sally Schreiner*

"Premiere Images," seriographs by David Peter Hunsberger of Waterloo, Ont., and sculpture by Milton Good of Elizabethtown, Pa., are on display from Nov. 22 to Jan. 15, 1987, at the People's Place Gallery, Main Street, Intercourse, PA 17534.

The Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan and the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta held a joint delegate session Oct. 18 regarding Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute. Delegates decided on joint ownership of the school by the two conferences. Each year there will be a joint delegate conference to deal with constitutional changes, economic concerns and other school issues. The finance committee presented a plan to retire the capital debt, which is $378,000. This passed.

A six-member North American Council of Chinese Mennonites met in Winnipeg Sept. 8-9 for its inaugural meeting. Members of the council are David Chiu, Saskatoon, facilitator; Kenson Ho, Boston; Barclay Chong, Winnipeg; Peter Lin, Houston; Don Yoder, Phoenix, Ariz., and Rudy Regehr, Winnipeg, recorder. Four areas of involvement highlighted as important for the council are church planting, translation work, leadership development and public relations. The council represents congregations of the General Conference and Mennonite Church. The Mennonite Brethren Church has been invited to participate.

Church consultation on peacemaking held in Honduras

Tegucigalpa, Honduras (MCC)—There is always more than enough to do for peace. But after four years of tentative starts and mixed signals from Christian colleagues in Central America, priorities for peacemaking gelled at a Consultation on Peacemaking Strategies held here.

During Aug. 22-24 the Honduran church and Mennonite Central Committee, co-sponsors of the Central America Peace Portfolio, hosted 25 people representing all five Central American countries, plus Brazil, Mexico, the United States and Canada. Besides Mennonites the group included Christians from the Catholic, Moravian, Baptist, Friends, Methodist and Presbyterian churches.

The group agreed that the basis of all peace and justice work in Central America is the presence of faith communities that model just and peaceful relationships, or "shalom," in ways that point to the coming kingdom of God.

To promote such communities, the group emphasized the need for peace education, more democratic and communal church relationships and increased interchange between churches.

Gerald Schlabach, coordinator of MCC's Central America Peace Portfolio, said, "We invited a diverse, ecumenical group from all over Central America and asked some of them to talk about peacemaking strategies that Mennonites sometimes avoid. But some of the strongest affirmation for an Anabaptist style of peacemaking based in the faith community came from the same people who have the most experience in the more militant forms of non-violence."

Small discussion group meets during the peacemaking consultation held Aug. 22-24 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Creuza Maciel, for example, is coordinator of the Latin American non-violent network, Servicio Paz y Justicia (SERPAJ), which came to worldwide attention when previous coordinator Adolfo Perez Esquivel won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980. She urged the group to see the broad social relevance of non-violent action and participate in the struggle of unions, peasants and workers to "meet the needs of the people in their search for life."

But Maciel, a Roman Catholic from Brazil, also commented, "Increasingly, all of us share this Anabaptist vocation to become an adult church, a church truly converted."

The consultation began with a presentation by Juan Ochoa, a Honduran Mennonite pastor who directs the Honduran church's involvement in the peace portfolio, on "The Biblical Vision of Shalom."

Centering his talk on the words of the prophet Isaiah, Ochoa noted that "when the Messiah transforms the selfishness we carry in our hearts, a new order begins, an order that contributes to social change even beyond its members, an order with dimensions far beyond the community itself."

Gilberto Flores, Mennonite pastor in Guatemala, spoke on "The Anabaptist Strategy of Alternative Community." To choose this alternative, he said, means assuming the risks of commitment to peace and justice. "I find that to speak of being an alternative community in Central America means being a community at the margin of society, locating ourselves among the poor and marginalized who are at the center of God's action in history but far from the centers of domination."

Julio Quan, a Guatemalan peace activist and director of Friends World College in Costa Rica, spoke on "The People's Strategy of Nonviolent Mobilization." A social scientist, Quan emphasized that peacemaking must grow not only out of ethical values but on careful study of social reality.

Norman Bent, a Moravian pastor from eastern Nicaragua, presented "The Strategy and Technique of Mediation Conflicts." Bent spoke from his experiences during the last four years as an active participant in his church's efforts to mediate between the Sandinista government and Miskito Indians, some of whom have taken up arms against the Sandinistas.

Finally, Joe Eldridge, previous director of the Washington Office on Latin America and now a Methodist missionary in Honduras, spoke on "The Strategy of Lobbying for Changes in Public Policy." He described the challenge of dealing with government policymakers as being as pragmatic as possible without losing the prophetic perspective on injustice.

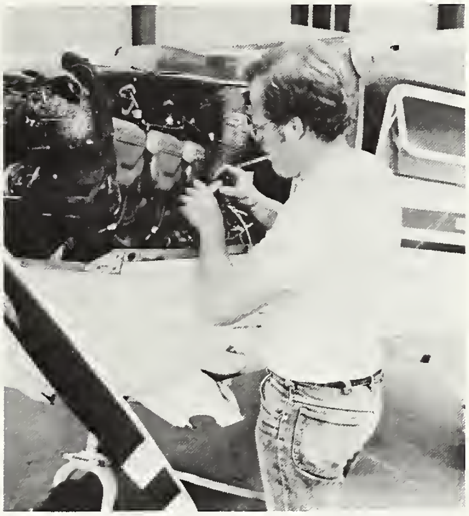
Gilberto Flores summed up why peace education and the "creation of more Anabaptist ways of being the church" were so important. "Lobbying and public protest are valid," he said. "A few of us in the Mennonite church have been involved in some lobbying efforts within the Guatemalan government. But if I get thrown in jail for speaking the truth, who will stand with me? We need to do a lot more work among the pews so that we can speak as a community. That is the only way change will come."

Howard Zehr, director of the Office of Criminal Justice, Mennonite Central Committee, Elkhart, Ind., spoke on "The Death Penalty in America Today" to a group of Newton (Kan.) area ministers and friends on Oct. 15. The event was sponsored by the peace and justice office of the General Conference Mennonite Church. "Murder is an outrage. But does taking a life through the death penalty communicate that murder is wrong?" Zehr asked. "The death penalty acts in a spirit of brutality and revenge. We have to begin by affirming life." Zehr noted that the New Testament clearly draws the line against the death penalty.

Last spring Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., announced a church scholarship program whereby Bethel would offer a one-quarter match to students whose Mennonite church offered a scholarship. Currently 41 Mennonite congregations are offering scholarships to 214 students enrolled at Bethel College. The average amount of those scholarships has risen from $830 in 1985-86 to $1,215 in 1986-87.

Handel's "Messiah" will be performed Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. in Founders Hall on the Bluffton (Ohio) College campus. This is the 91st presentation of the "Messiah," which is performed annually by the Bluffton College Choral Society. The event is free and open to the public.

'People are important,' says missionary pilot



Airplanes are a "costly proposition" in Botswana, says Eugene Thieszen. But he adds that "in a country with vast distances, scattered people, poor roads and few doctors, airplanes are necessary to provide primary health care."

Thieszen is seconded to Flying Missions by Mennonite Ministries (a cooperation of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee). He has flown a Mosarwa woman to South Africa for lifesaving cancer surgery and a surgeon to a district health center in time to perform an emergency C-section.

"Africa has a precious value that many of us North Americans have lost," say Thieszen. "Here people are important. Everything else is secondary."

When he sits on the airstrip at Takatokwane, the real issue "is not what I did by flying the doctor to the clinic but whether or not I greet the children at the airstrip fence . . . instead of locking myself in the airplane and going to sleep."

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JANUARY 19–23, 1987
African Christianity: Assessing the Problems and Prospects. Dr. Lamin Sanneh, Harvard University.

JANUARY 26–30
Mission in the Americas: an Inter-American Perspective. Prof. Jorge Lara-Braud, San Francisco Theological Seminary.

FEBRUARY 9–11
When Church and State Go Abroad: Mission Compromised? Mr. Bruce Nichols, Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, Dr. Ian Hay, SIM International, Fr. Bryan Hehir, U.S. Catholic Conference, and Mr. Norman Barth, Lutheran World Relief. Co-sponsored by the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs and Princeton Seminary Center of Continuing Education, *at Princeton.*

MARCH 3–6
Toward Century 21 in Mission. Dr. Gerald H. Anderson, OMSC Director.

MARCH 10–13
Mission Under Authoritarian Governments. Dr. James M. Phillips, Associate Director, OMSC.

MARCH 16–20
The Gospel in African Robes: Toward the Africanization of the Gospel. Dr. David Bosch, University of South Africa. Co-sponsored by Theological Students Fellowship.

MARCH 23–27
The Church and Women in the Third World. Ms. Hyun Kyung Chung, Union Theological Seminary, Dr. Mercy Amba Oduyoye, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, and Dr. John Webster former Presbyterian missionary in India.

MARCH 30–APRIL 3
Evangelism and the Poor. Rev. Vinay Samuel, Evangelical Fellowship of India, Bangalore.

APRIL 6–10
Popular Religiosity: Mission Responses to a Global Challenge. Dr. Paul Hiebert, Fuller Seminary School of World Mission. Co-sponsored by Maryknoll Mission Institute (at OMSC).

APRIL 20–24
Urban Mission—A Biblical, Historical and Biographical Workshop. Dr. Raymond J. Bakke, Northern Baptist Seminary. Co-sponsored by Inter-Varsity Evangelism, Latin America Mission, Mission to the World, Southern Baptist FMB, Theological Students Fellowship, and World Vision, U.S.

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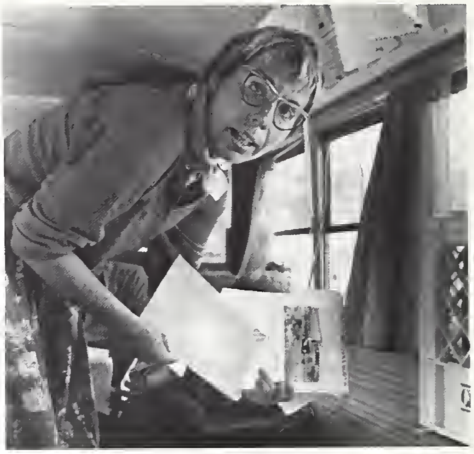
Open House is a fast-paced hour-long program on CBC Radio that looks at the world through the eyes of religion and at religion through the eyes of the world. It is broadcast each Sunday at 7:05 p.m. EST (8:05 Atlantic, 8:35 Newfoundland). Peter Meggs is the host.



"Slavery was eliminated, women can vote and we can abolish nuclear weapons," says Paulien Geitenbeek (right) of Amsterdam, Holland, a member of the Great Peace March for Nuclear Disarmament, which arrived in Washington in mid-November. Geitenbeek spoke in several Mennonite churches en route from Los Angeles to Washington. Other Mennonites in the group were Dawn and Kent Friesen and Donna Williams from Colorado and Mary Prinz from Wisconsin.

Police detain secretary of Transkei Council of Churches

Moundridge, Kan. (GCMC)—The Transkei security police are continuing to hold the secretary for the Transkei Council of Churches in detention after releasing four other staff members for the council and General Conference Mennonite Church missionary Larry Hills on Nov. 13, said Ezra Sigwela, TCC coordinator and office manager. A person who was visiting the council was detained with the others and was also released on Nov. 13.

Sigwela, 46, has been living in Moundridge since Oct. 22 with his wife, Zukiswa, 25, and their 2-month-old daughter. They are participants in a Mennonite Central Committee program that brings South African church workers to North America for several weeks.

The secretary, NoTuesday Tyali, 24, is being detained at an unknown location and is accused of printing pamphlets against the Transkei government, he said. Hills, a visitor and five staff members, including Tyali, were detained by the Transkei security police at the TCC headquarters in Umtata Oct. 31. The police also confiscated the council's typewriter and duplicating machine at the time of the arrests. Hills works as a Bible teacher for the TCC under Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

In an interview here, Sigwela stated that he has also received word that the security police have been visiting his house in Umtata to ask his whereabouts. "I'm afraid they think I am guilty (of printing the pamphlets) because I am not there," he said.

Although Sigwela does not rule out the possibility that someone from the TCC printed the pamphlets as a favor to a friend, he feels that that likelihood is "almost impossible. We are very strict about the use of our equipment. We have a policy that at no time should the office be used for political purposes," he said.

However, the authorities believe that the TCC is involved in political activities because "we have been critical of the government," said Sigwela. As part of its work in the community, the TCC helps political detainees and their families. "We are against detention without trial and detention without notification of next of kin," he said. "We are also concerned about the treatment of detainees."

As a result of his outspokenness on this issue and his work with victims of government action, Sigwela was arrested and detained for five weeks in January. At that time he was also accused for the first time of printing material against the government. Sigwela said he repeatedly asked the police to prove their accusations, but they were not able to show him any evidence.

Later, in March, the police came to the TCC offices to take printed samples from their equipment, said Sigwela. He is certain he will be arrested and detained again for allegedly printing anti-government material when he returns to South Africa in early December. Sigwela contends he has neither printed nor authorized the printing of such material.

The Transkei security police have even gone so far as to suggest that "the Transkei Council of Churches is a front for the ANC [African National Congress]. We are not something near to that," said an exasperated Sigwela. "These are common fears, but they are all unfounded.

"We in the church have enough to say about goodness and justice. We do not need the platform of politicians. It is a Christian's calling to defend those who are weak from the excesses of the powerful," he said. "There are people in the government who call themselves Christians, but they do not want to understand the gospel. They ignore their beliefs because they do not want to affect their position of advantage."

The TCC is comprised of 22 churches, which belong to one of the mainline denominations or the African independent churches. It was started in 1964 as the Transkei Christian Council. *Carla Reimer*

Mennonite singles

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Coordinator wanted. The Commission on Home Ministries is seeking a person, preferably from a minority group, for a half-time position consulting and planning with Mennonite minority groups and church institutions and boards to more fully include all ethnic groups in the conference family. A college education, cross-cultural experience, Christian faith and administrative experience are required. Applications are needed by Dec. 12, 1986. For more information, contact the Commission on Home Ministries, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

The Sharing Community in Rosedale is searching for a good stonemason to repair one corner of a playground wall, work to be done in 1987. The playground was built 10 years ago on the site of an old schoolyard. It is the only place in a small low-income neighborhood of Kansas City, Kan., where kids can play off the streets. Sharing Community, an outreach program of Rainbow Mennonite Church, Rosedale United Methodist Church and Rosedale Christian Church, owns and maintains the playground on a limited budget. Contact Harley Marshall, 1629A Southwest Blvd., Kansas City, KS 66103, (913) 262-5617.

Alcohol is involved in 66 percent of fatal accidents, 70 percent of all murders, 41 percent of assaults, 53 percent of fire deaths, 50 percent of rapes, 60 percent of sex crimes against children, 60 percent of child abuse, 56 percent of fights and assaults in homes, 37 percent of suicides, 55 percent of all arrests, 36 percent of pedestrian accidents, 22 percent of home accidents, 45 percent of drownings, 50 percent of skiing accidents and more admissions to mental hospitals than any other cause, according to statistics from 1983 U.S. Health and Human Services and 1982 FBI files.

JustLife is a bipartisan (U.S.) political action committee organized by Christians. It uses three main issues to determine its support for candidates: the nuclear arms race, poverty and abortion. JustLife rejects the position that more and newer weapon systems are the way to achieve disarmament. JustLife supports governmental programs that empower the poor to become self-sufficient. JustLife opposes all abortions, except when necessary to save the life of the mother.

Job openings

Bluffton College job openings—Three faculty openings beginning fall 1987. Send letter of application, resume, transcripts, and arrange for three letters of reference to: Arden Slotter, Dean of Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817.

Chemistry, Ph.D. in chemistry or biochemistry with strong teaching competence in organic chemistry and biochemistry. Rank and salary open. Course responsibilities will include organic chemistry, biochemistry, general chemistry and suitably related general education courses.

Social Work, MSW and ACSW eligibility required, Ph.D. preferred. Social work experience and teaching experience required. Rank and salary open. Responsibilities include teaching policy, practice and field work and supervision of field work.

Music, master's degree required, doctor's degree preferred. Experience in secondary teaching required, experience at the college level preferred. Rank and salary open. Responsibilities include teaching courses in music education, providing voice instruction, directing choral groups, teaching a variety of courses including general education music courses.

Cook/housekeeper needed. Position begins **Jan. 1**. Responsibilities include cooking and cleaning for a year-round camp and retreat center. Salary/stipend negotiable.

For more information contact Curt Bechler, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031, (616) 476-2426.

Administrator/director required **Silver Lake Mennonite Camp.** Full-time position beginning **Jan. 1, 1987**.

Apply in confidence to: George Janzen, 247 Carleton St., St. Catharines, ON L2M 1B5.

Community education programs important at Conrad Grebel College

Waterloo, Ont. (CGC)—The Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies at Conrad Grebel College here, under the new direction of Ron Mathies, is offering education programs to the community.

In early September visiting professor Jannie Malan from the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, gave a public lecture on the role of the church in South Africa. He also spoke at the college's student and faculty community dinner, and fielded students' questions on such issues as the effectiveness of economic sanctions on apartheid, the involvement of South African university students in political protests and the role of the church within and outside South Africa.

On Sept. 26 Mary Ann Sullivan, professor of English and art history at Bluffton (Ohio) College, gave a slide presentation and lecture entitled "Visual Artists Look at Issues of War and Peace." Sullivan's presentation was a creative and informative look at images of mainly war throughout the ages up to contemporary art.

In October Peter and Leonna Penner, Mennonite Central Committee Canada Peace and Social Concerns coordinators, discussed topics of "Peacemaking and Evangelism" and "Christian Peacemaker Teams viewed through Africa Experience."

Ron Sider, Mennonite author, theologian and professor at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, spoke in October on "Intervention in Violent Situations by a Nonviolent Peace Brigade," probing the idea of Christian Peacemaker Teams.

IPACS also sponsored a one-day workshop on Christian Peacemaker Teams in November at Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo.

In November a public lecture was cosponsored with Science for Peace. Rosalie Bertell, a well-known author, spoke on radiation dangers and environmental concerns.

The education programs of IPACS aimed at the wider community are an attempt to promote the many opportunities for learning beyond the classroom and the textbook. These programs are generally offered during the evenings, and all are free. *Linda Sauder*

RECORD

WORKERS

Ray Dumais, a Metis Christian originally from Prince Albert, Sask., has been contracted by the Native Ministries board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada as a Native Urban Ministries worker in Saskatoon for one year. Native Ministries is also involved in urban ministries in Winnipeg.

Clarice and *Lawrence Kratz* were ordained Sept. 14 as co-pastors at the Mennonite Fellowship, Waukesha, Wis.

Nancy Kerr became pastor at Pulaski (Iowa) Church in mid-October.

Laura Martens, Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, began a two-year MVS term Oct. 20 on staff of the Pleasant Valley Outdoor Center in Woodstock, Ill. Her parents are John and Margaret Martens of Winnipeg.

Marian Suderman, Peace Church, Richmond, B.C., has begun a two-year MCC term at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa., where she is working as secretary with material aid. Her par-

In the Nov. 25 issue we mistakenly listed Don Klassen as chairperson of the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta. The chairperson is named Dan Klassen. Sorry.

The Mennonite Brethren Training Center and the Study Center of the Uruguay Mennonite Churches jointly organized a course in Montevideo Aug. 11-22. Basing his presentation on his book *El Evangelio: Mensaje de Paz* (*The Gospel: Message of Peace*), Mennonite missionary John Driver guided the group of some 30 people in a study of the Scriptures. According to Milka Rindzinski of Montevideo, participants felt the course offered an important step toward a better understanding of God's shalom, which ought to determine the lifestyle of the messianic community.

The Japan Anabaptist Center in Tokyo has launched a series of lectures on Anabaptist/Mennonite themes, commemorating the 450th anniversary of Menno Simons' conversion to Anabaptism. The first lecture of the series was given July 6 by C. Norman Kraus, a Mennonite Board of Missions missionary in Hokkaido, who spoke on the relevancy of Anabaptism for 20th-century Japanese Christianity. On Aug. 24 Takio Tanase of the Eastern Hokkaido Bible School spoke on the Anabaptists's understanding of the Bible. Takashi Yamada, pastor at Kirishima Christian Brotherhood, spoke in September.

Martens

Wieler

ents are Martha and William Sudermann of Delta, B.C.

Michiko Takarabe, 50, wife of Pastor Takarabe of the Atago Christian Church, Nobeoka City, Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan, died of cancer Oct. 6, three months after her illness was diagnosed. Her death is the first among the pastoral team in our Mennonite churches in Japan. They have two children, daughter Yurika, and son Akito.

Alvin and *Shirley Thiessen*, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, have begun a two-year MCCC local voluntary service term in Winnipeg. Alvin is an assistant accountant with MCCC. Shirley is a bookkeeper with the Young Parents' Community Centre. Both attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. Alvin received bachelor's degrees in history and religion, and theology. His father is Frank Thiessen of Winkler, Man. Her parents are Margaret and Ralph Tiessen of Leamington, Ont.

Arnold and *Marjorie Wright Thompson* returned to the United States in July, having worked as General Conference missionaries in Hwalien, Taiwan, since 1981. Arnold was director of community health and general practice at Mennonite Christian Hospital. They are living in Wheaton, Ill.

Scott Unger is serving half time as assistant to the pastor at Grace Church, Regina.

Franz Wiebe is the new leading minister at First Church, Winnipeg, replacing *Victor Kliewer*, who is the new principal of Elim Bible Institute, Altona, Man.

Westgate Collegiate, Winnipeg, announces the following staff changes: *Gayle Wiebe*, music and English, is studying at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.; *John Enns*, math and English, has a one-year leave of absence. New teachers include *Vic Pankratz*, music; *Ed Epp*, returning from a two-year teaching term in China; *Ruth Vogt*, English.

Barbara Wieler, Nutana Park Church, Saskatoon, began a one-year MVS term Sept. 1 as a child-care worker at Community Mennonite Day Care Center in Markham, Ill. Her parents are Alfred and Elizabeth Wieler of Saskatoon.

Alvin and *Patricia Wood*, West Abbotsford Church, Abbotsford, B.C., have begun three-year MCC terms in Jamaica. Alvin is working as a coordinator/instructor in vocational education and Patricia as a homemaker. They have one child, Amanda Grace. His mother is Donalda Wood, hers is Helen Vogt, both of Vancouver.

Nine General Conference Mennonite young people recently began one-year terms under SALT (Serve and Learn Together), a program sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Canada. Designed for high school graduates between 17 and 20 years old, SALT offers an opportunity to live with a group of others in a unit house in another province, do voluntary Christian service in a meaningful job and study the Bible together under the guidance of adult leaders.

Elma Bergen, Neuanlage Grace Church, Hague, Sask., is working with the elderly at Bethania Mennonite Personal Care Home in Winnipeg.

Ruby Boehr, Bethany Church, Watrous, Sask., is working with mentally disabled people at the Hope Centre, Winnipeg.

Melinda Dyck, Home Street Church, Winnipeg, is involved in a day workshop for mentally and physically disabled adults at the Community Living Society in Vancouver.

Melanie Hildebrand, Sargent Avenue Church, Winnipeg, is providing child care at the Montessori School in Unionville, Ont.

Linda Neufeld, Boissevain (Man.) Whitewater Church, is working in two Vancouver locations: the Small World Day Care and Moffat House, a home for unwed mothers.

Steven Pauls, Charleswood Church, Winnipeg, is working at High Point, a group home for mentally disabled people in Unionville, Ont.

Monika Pries, Springfield Heights Church, Winnipeg, is working at the Unionville (Ont.) Montessori School.

Lisa Thiessen, Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church, is working at the Community Living Society's day workshop in Vancouver.

Jennifer Warkentin, Glenlea (Man.) Church, is working at High Point with mentally disabled people, Unionville, Ont.

The Intermenno program is a one-year exchange program with Europe, administered by the Intermenno Trainee Committee of Europe. This committee is made up of representatives from the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and France. MCC assists in preparing

Poverty is the number one killer of children in America, according to the Children's Defense Fund. It claims more young lives every year than car accidents and suicide combined. Over a five-year period more American children die from poverty than the total number of American battle deaths during the Vietnam War. A baby born in Newark, N.J., today is as likely to die in the first year of life as a child born in Costa Rica. Poverty is a way of life for over 13 million children in the United States. The overwhelming majority of poor children are white, but black children are 2½ times as likely to be poor.

"One of seven health-care dollars is for people within six months of dying," said Willard Krabill, a Goshen, Ind., physician, at a health ethics hearing sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid and held Sept. 20 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church. Elvin Souder, an attorney and member of Zion Mennonite Church in Souderton, Pa., spoke about living will versus durable power of attorney forms. He argued that durable power of attorney is more effective. "Living wills are often only legally binding to a small degree," he said.

Christians from North and South Korea met face to face for the first time since the division of Korea in 1945 in what has been hailed as a major ecumenical development. "For a meeting of this sort to take place, not secretly but openly . . . is of considerable importance," said Dwain Epps of the National Council of Churches.

RECORD

A. Bergen

Goertz

Janzen

Olfert

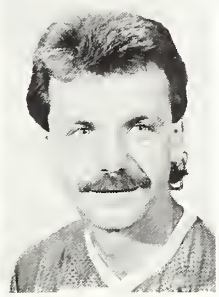
Peters

A. Schmidt

Heinrichs

Hildebrand

Pannabecker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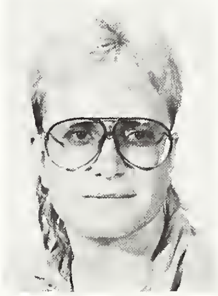

L. Schmidt

Strempler

the participants for the experience. General Conference participants and their first six month's assignments in this year's program follow.

Anita Bergen, Zion Church, Swift Current, Sask., is working at Bibelnheim, West Germany, as a vineyard worker for the Schonhals family.

Shari Erickson, Faith Church, Minneapolis, is working at Mainz, West Germany, as a gardener and child-care worker.

Joel E. Goertz, Tabor Church, Newton, Kan., is working on a farm near Gollheim, West Germany.

Audrey D. Heinrichs, Rosenfeld (Man.) Bergthaler Church, is working in Heiloo, Netherlands, cleaning and packaging flower bulbs.

Agatha Hildebrand, Bergthaler Church, Winkler, Man., is working at Biedershausen, West Germany, as a farm- and child-helper for the Ernst family.

John Janzen, Steinbach (Man.) Church, is working at Treuchtlingen, West Germany, for the Weiss family.

Jake Olfert, Bergthaler Church, Morden, Man., is working at Schoorl, Netherlands, as a painter and landscaper.

Cheryl Pannabecker, First Church, Bluffton, Ohio, is working at Bolsward, Netherlands, as a nurse's aide in the It Menniste Skil.

Gord Penner, Bergthaler Church, Gretna, Man., is working at Gut Lichtenberg, West Germany, as a farm helper.

Wendy Peters, Hoffnungsfelder Church, Rabbit Lake, Sask., is working at Zaandam, Netherlands, as a housekeeper in a home for the elderly.

Amy Schmidt, Buhler (Kan.) Church, is working at Neuhausen, West Germany, on a chicken farm.

Lynn D. Schmidt, Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kan., is working at Kaiserslautern, West Germany, as a vegetable farmer with the Heinz Albrecht family.

Elizabeth Schrock, Casselton (N.D.) Church, is working at Rotterdam, Netherlands, as an assistant to the caretaker for a church there.

Hilde Strempler, Douglas Church, Winnipeg, is working at Enkenbach, West Germany, as a nurse's aide in the Mennonite retirement and nursing home there.

"He knew more about life than many adults do."

Before he became ill, three-year-old Will Voth entertained his folks with a stream of toddler lore. He loved zoos, balloons, Sesame Street, dandelions, and pinecones. One day his mother, Carolyn, noticed he seemed dizzy. Suspecting another earache, she took him to the doctor. What she and Tim learned was, as she says, "a parent's worst nightmare."

Doctors confirmed their fears: Will had a malignant brain tumor. He faced the next months' surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation with good humor and bravery. Says Carolyn, "Each bad day was just a bad day—to him, the future wasn't bad. He got through the bad day and expected a good day to come."

Voths' family and church community helped make some of the bad days better. "People turned their love into action," Carolyn says. During Will's illness, the Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church in Wichita, Kansas, and Mennonite Mutual Aid helped pay the family's medical bills. After Will's death, MMA gave a Burial Aid grant.

"In his simple way, Will showed Christian love and respect," Carolyn says. "We have learned from him." As you participate with MMA, you join the family helping the Voths and others . . . just as the seeds in the pinecone protect and support each other.

Mennonite
Mutual Aid
Post Office Box 483
Goshen, IN 46526

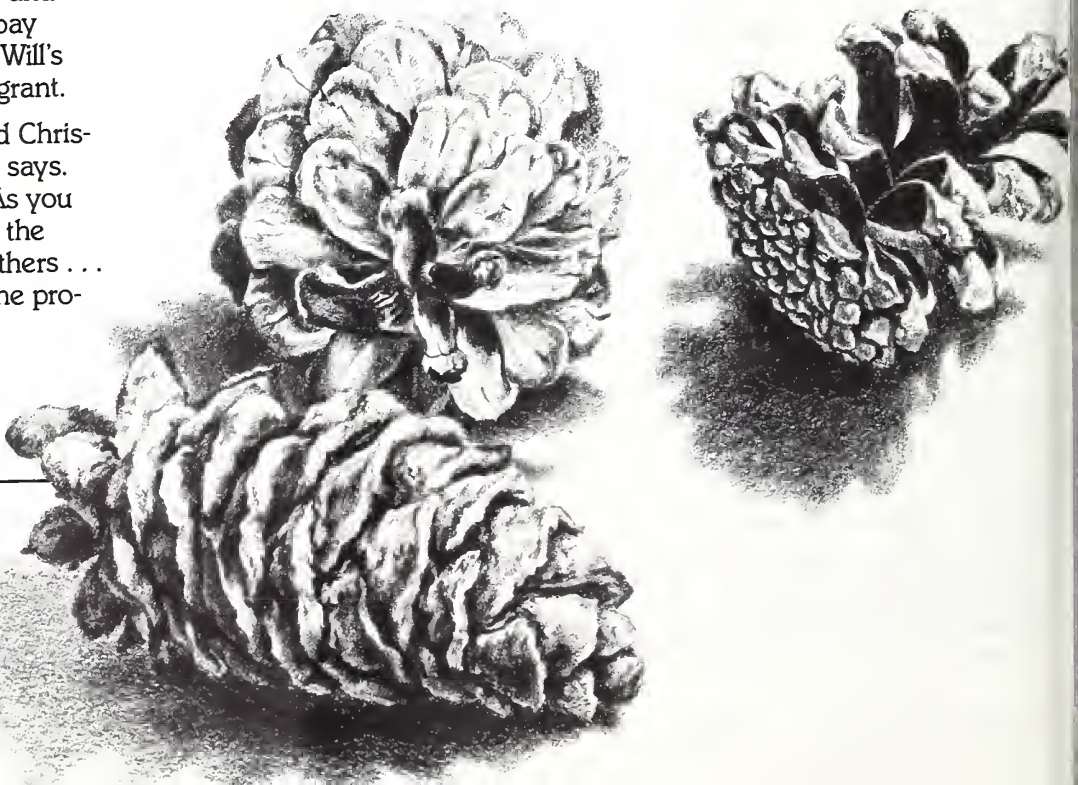


Illustration by Nick Antonakis

"Maybe we can't go overseas to work, but it's a great satisfaction to know that here I am at home supporting those who are working out there in the thick of it."

— Mary Frances Drudge
Markham, Ontario

Down's syndrome hasn't stopped Carl Drudge from serving others. Carl weaves rag rugs from unsaleable clothes donated to the Care & Share Shoppe in Stouffville, Ont. His sister Mary Frances washes and cuts the fabric and ties the finished rugs. The rugs are sold at the shop and proceeds go to MCC. Carl and Mary Frances also worked for many years selling MCC SELFHELP Crafts. They are among the thousands who volunteer for MCC at home.

Everyone can be an MCC volunteer.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
21 South 12th Street
Box M
Akron, PA 17501

MCC Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9

The idolatry of language

Janet M. Ruth

Change is never an easy thing. Those who advocate the change believe it does not occur fast enough, and those who prefer the status quo believe it cannot be slowed down enough.

As we struggle with new ways of thinking about God, the issue of inclusive language is one that continues to evoke these feelings in the church today. There are no easy answers. Unfortunately, as with many controversial issues, the two extremes are often viewed as the only options: the "feminist" option is seen as advocating the removal of all masculine descriptions of God and perhaps even the substitution of all feminine references. This is a rather simplistic perspective on a much more complex question.

Initially there is some distinction to be made between the substitution of more inclusive terms in place of words such as "men" and "brotherhood" and the use of particular nouns and pronouns to refer to God. The former is a proposal which, although not completely resolved, has certainly gained some acceptance. In a society where words are so important, their use and their implications are also significant. Words carry not only a surface dictionary meaning but also a meaning that reveals deeper societal biases. For example, in light of the civil rights movement it is no longer acceptable to refer to an adult black man as "boy" because of its derogatory connotations. The underlying societal views of women revealed by the use of "men" to refer to a group of people consisting of 50 percent women are no less serious.

This aspect of inclusive language, however, does not seem to be the one that raises the most hackles. The central question surrounds the terms we use to refer to God.

In my struggles to make sense of this issue I am constantly called to reflect on my experiences with God. There seem to be several recurring themes. God is always defying my feeble attempts to define a power beyond my comprehension. This doesn't leave me with a negative feeling as much as one of awe—of being confronted by my finitude in light of infinity. In our present life and with our human limitations we will never be able to completely comprehend such a Being. I have also experienced a God of love who cares for me deeply enough to be present and involved in my daily life. In our sinfulness we humans find it difficult to comprehend a loving God who makes continual efforts to break into human history in spite of the hardness of our hearts. And finally, I have experienced a God who loves everyone equally, who does not make distinctions between people because of race or age or sex.

The most wonderful manifestation of all these themes is God's revelation in Jesus Christ. He refused to fit any of the easy "Messiah boxes" that those of his day had constructed; he loved prostitutes and tax collectors as much as he loved regular churchgoers, and he loved us enough to die for us. However, we sometimes overlook the most significant aspect of that incarnation. Jesus, as God's incarnation, was *incidently* a man (as opposed to a woman). His significance lies in his presence as God/human and not in his maleness.

God is always defying my feeble attempts to define a power beyond my comprehension. In our present life and with our human limitations we will never be able to completely comprehend such a Being.

In fact, it is important to note that God also appeared to people on other occasions in various other forms—as a pillar of cloud, in a burning bush, as a still, small voice after a whirlwind, as a blinding light. In addition, God is present in many less tangible forms that may vary with the individual. For example, I feel particularly close to God when sitting by the ocean. All of this is to say that God is broader and larger and more wonderful than any of our minds comprehend. To put limits on those perceptions or to focus solely on a particular image to the exclusion of all others, is to limit God.

Those who advocate change are rightly warned of the dangers of "throwing the baby out with the bathwater." Masculine images of God do have meaning. But other images can only enrich our experiences if we are open to them. I do not advocate removing all references to God as Father but rather accepting some less recognized but nevertheless biblical images of God.

God as Father is a wonderful image that evokes special memories of experiences with my father. But again the meaning in this image lies not in the maleness of my father but in his love for me and his discipline and his wisdom. The image of God as Mother can be equally as beautiful and evoke many of the same images of God's love symbolically described as parental love. Either image is our attempt to place our experience of God in a context that we understand, a symbolic description rather than a statement of reality. Therefore we would not assert that God really looks like an old, white man with a long beard, regardless of the pictures we saw in Sunday school. Why is it then so difficult to image God as a woman?

To those who would say that the concept of a Mother-God is a return to some form of idol worship I ask whether there is any difference in worshiping a Father-God. It seems to me that attempting to create one image of God for all circumstances is as much idolatry as our worship of other gods. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned from the story of Aaron and the golden calf.

Those advocating feminine imagery of God, for the most part, are not looking to supply God with a consort or to make God into a fertility goddess. For that matter, this is a significant red herring, since it could be argued that the similarities between fertility worship and feminine images of God bear a striking resemblance to the parallels between the worship of other male gods and the widespread worship of machismo and violence manifest in our society today. As Mennonites we should be particularly aware of the dangers of attributing to God characteristics of the prevailing society. Our ancestors staked their lives on the assertion that their God was larger than the narrow interpretations of the day and that the Scriptures confirmed this.

Advocates of female imagery are

simply seeking recognition of the beautiful feminine images of God found in the Bible. Although I could expand on the image of God as a mother eagle in Psalm 91:4 (regardless of the masculine pronouns used in the translations) or Jesus' use of the parable of the woman searching for the lost coin as an image of the kingdom of God, I will end by sharing one of my favorite feminine images of God and a reflection from my devotional journal.

"But thou art she who drew me from the womb, who laid me at my mother's breast. Upon thee was I cast at birth; from my mother's womb thou hast been my God" (Psalm 22:9-10, NEB).

God is a wise old midwife who has, with her hands, drawn out of pain more lives (or new ideas) than we can imagine. She doesn't get rid of the pain of the birthing process, but she grabs hold of our hand and says, "Now, breathe like this; bear down; push!" And then she holds in her wrinkled old hands a new life, born out of pain, which touches us forever.

Janet M. Ruth lives at 1820 Harvard St. NW, #201, Washington, DC 20009.

LETTERS

Fisher-Price goes to war

Fisher-Price Toys is now marketing war toys for young children. The whimsical "little people," for which Fisher-Price is famous, are now dressed in camouflage combat fatigues. The weaponry includes a toy arsenal of components for tanks, missiles, planes and helicopters. The toy sets come with cannons, bombs, camouflage-colored panels and realistic decals. For 50 years Fisher-Price has been a leader in producing safe and educational toys which have encouraged imaginative play among preschoolers. We are therefore shocked and outraged that such a company as Fisher-Price would create toys that encourage violent play among our children, who live in an already too-violent world. Although the toys are not yet available in our area, they supposedly have been marketed nationwide and will certainly appear on store shelves for Christmas. Join us in writing to Dave Fisher, Vice President for Marketing, and R. Bruce Sampsell, President, Fisher-Price, 606 Girard Ave., East Aurora, NY 14052. Join with us in a boycott of all Fisher-Price products until the company discontinues its production of war toys. *Judith Janzen, Bob Nikkel, 437 17th St. N.E., Salem, OR 97301*

Nov. 2

Letters are important

I thank you for letting it be possible for me to receive *The Mennonite.* I enjoy reading it and the letters you have in it. Also I would like to thank those who . . . correspond with me, because letters help me a lot, and I feel things will start to change my life. May God bless you all. *Billy Ashford, #610682, A-3117, KSIR, Box 1568, Hutchinson, KS 67504-1568*

Nov. 10

Labeling sins

It is with considerable sorrow that I read Mary Giesbrecht Friesen's letter (Oct. 28 issue) continuing the homosexual bashing going on in the General Conference Mennonite Church. A quick review of the Gospels shows that Jesus didn't have much to say on the subject (except for a curious verse in Luke 17:34: "I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left"). How then can such a subject cause such a hardening of the heart? The writer of the letter states the "the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was homosexuality." Say what? Let us at least open our ears and hear the prophet Ezekiel: "The crime of your sister Sodom was pride, gluttony, arrogance, complacency; such were the sins of Sodom and her daughters. They never helped the poor and needy. . ." (Ezekiel 16:49, JB). Perhaps the Reagan administration stands exposed as the true Sodomites.

Somehow a belief has arisen that unless our conference labels a specific behavior as "sin," it has gone soft and by its silence given its consent. What next? Can we expect to see future General Conference sessions devoted to resolutions on murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness (Mark 7:21-22)? Who wishes to write the resolution against pride? Why is there not a greater clamor for a resolution declaring foolishness a sin? Is it because there are more foolish people among us than homosexuals? *David E. Ortman, 1303 N. 41st, Seattle, WA 98103*

Nov. 12

Film available

To the Mennonites of the diaspora (Oct. 28 issue): We have seen many of you at our films, especially at the showings of *And When They Shall Ask.* You have been most responsive. Watch *The Mennonite* for announcements regarding future Mennonite-related films. *And When They Shall Ask* can be ordered from Inspiraction Films, 7200 S. Central Ave., La Grange, IL 60525 (1-800-323-4283 outside of Illinois) for $150 U.S. per showing. The video of the film can be purchased for $89.95 U.S. from Faith and Life Bookstore, 724 Main St., Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-2201, or in Canada from Dueck Film Productions Ltd., 201-1382 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg, MB R2G 1M8, (204) 661-2483.

You may wish to encourage your local Public Broadcasting Station to show *And When They Shall Ask.* It is available to them through CEN (Central Educational Network). *David Dueck, producer, 201-1382 Henderson Hwy., Winnipeg, MB R2G 1M8*

Nov. 12

books

The humble saint

God's Fool: the Life and Times of Francis of Assisi *by Julien Green (Harper & Row, 1985, 273 pages)*

Reviewed by Terry Stutzman, 14 Lateer Drive, Normal, IL 61761

French author Julien Green chronicles the life of Francesco di Bernardone, our Saint Francis of Assisi, with admirable thoroughness and a tender touch. Green's research covers the ancient sources: the writings left to us by Brother Leo, one of the saint's closest companions, Saint Bonaventura, Thomas of Celano and Thomas of Spoleto. Green's vivid portraits of the actual woods, caves and paths that Francis frequented make the book all the more real. Francis' life and thought are fused with details of the struggling world of the 13th century; we see the Catholic church at its worthy best and its most corrupt.

What I appreciate most is Green's sensitivity to and honesty in communicating not only the glories resulting from the saint's "mad" love for Christ but also Francis' very real weaknesses and disappointments.

One is surprised by Francis' rowdy youth but captivated by his great sense of joy in life; we can almost hear his crisp tenor songs ring in the stony streets. His conversion and dedication to a pure Christian witness challenges us to accept this written affirmation of the Spirit's power at work in one of the humblest hearts of human history.

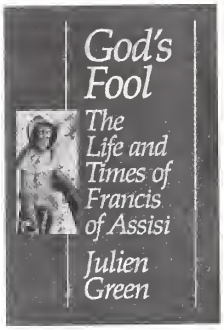
Like cakes of almond and honey, Francis' own favorite delicacy and a rare indulgence between fasts, these tantalizing and digestible vignettes of Francis' spirit can be savored slowly, a pinch at a time over a period of months, or feasted upon in a matter of days. By either approach, Green's book is a blessing of sustenance.

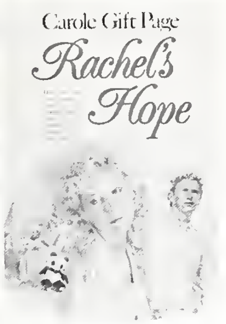
Picking up the pieces

Rachel's Hope *by Carole Gift Page (Herald Press, 1986, 204 pages)*

Reviewed by Janice Pauls, Route 2, McPherson, KS 67460

Many people hesitate to read fiction because they feel it is a waste of their time to concentrate on something make-believe. However, good writing that correctly reflects life, even though the characters and circumstances may be fictitious, can be interesting and enlightening.





Rachel's Hope, a novel by Carole Gift Page, approaches this description. Although at times the reader may feel like an observer gazing through a pane of glass rather than actually participating in the drama, the problems discussed are definitely an accurate reflection of what is happening in our society today.

Page sketches verbal pictures of Rachel, a young wife and mother beset with marital difficulties and a teenage son who shuts her out of his life. As the story reaches a climax, she faces several crisis situations that require a great deal of fortitude.

Life for Rachel and her husband is a puzzle. The challenge for both of them is how to assemble the pieces of their life into a meaningful picture, something that will make sense out of all the chaos. Each of them discovers eventually that the picture cannot be completed until Christ becomes part of their lives. He is the missing piece, the all-important key.

Rachel's Hope does not end with a happy-ever-after theme, but the conclusion is not completely dismal either. The reader will have to determine whether or not the solution to Rachel's dilemma is realistic.

Sighting the spiritual

All Nature Sings *by Margaret Clarkson (Eerdmans, 1986, 138 pages)*

Reviewed by Helen Friesen, Box 256, Butterfield, MN 56120

In 60 short chapters the writer takes you to her small cottage along the shores of the Severn River in Canada. Ten of these brief chapters are her nature poems.

She shares observations about nature as it unfolds before her. She ties the sightings she makes in nature to lessons in the spiritual world.

You'll delight reading about her encounter with bats, how she names the hummingbirds that visit her feeder and how she deals with one she dubs "Harpy," who chases away other hummingbirds and makes life miserable for them.

A devoted bird-watcher, Clarkson finds natural wonders all about her, whether it is the first blooms poking through the snow or how the loon teaches its young to swim when less than 24 hours old.

At her newly acquired cottage she finds things the former owner planted still living. She asks, "And when my days on earth are ended, will the fragrance of Christ be left behind?"

She notes how the aspen's sensitive leaves quiver when leaves of all other trees hang motionless. Once again she draws the parallel: "Have I as great a sensitivity to the breath of God as aspen leaves have for the breathing that goes unnoticed by the rest of the forest?"

This delightful book will enrich any library. Pastors will find many helpful illustrations from nature. The short chapters lend themselves to devotional times. An ideal gift for a lover of nature.

Orthodox Christmas

Christmas: the Annual of Christmas Literature and Art, Volume 56 *(Augsburg, 1986, 64 pages)*

Reviewed by Gordon Houser, assistant editor

In this year's Christmas annual Augsburg focuses on Eastern Christianity. Donald W. Wisner describes "Eastern Orthodox Christmas," and George Muedeking writes "A Dialog (sic) with God," two articles that give a good description of Eastern Orthodox belief and history. "Family Celebrations of Orthodox Christians" are described in Russia, Greece, Armenia, the Ukraine and Romania. Orthodox beliefs are further delineated in the description of a Russian icon, "The Nativity of Christ."

The volume contains other, more traditional stories, plus Ukranian carols with the music written out. But the focus on Eastern Orthodoxy, a much neglected tradition, is most helpful.

Take hope

Earl F. Cater

It was Christmastime. There was a sense of expectation in the air. The roads and stores were filled with shoppers plump with warm wraps and loaded with sacks. But as I entered one department store I saw crouched against a sales display a woman weeping.

Throngs of people crowded around her grabbing for the precious trinket offered at a never-before-price and all of them were oblivious to the weeping person they stepped over and on. Faintly, ever so faintly, she sobbed, "Doesn't anyone care?"

We are all keenly aware that some people despair at Christmas. Rather than embrace the gaiety with glowing warmth, they fall deeper into depression. Christmas reminds them of past joys lost or future pleasure unobtainable. Perhaps you are one who becomes complacent, moody or even depressed during the Christmas season.

There does not seem to be much to hope for when no one cares. There does not seem to be much to hope for when we hurt. We often hope for earthly affection, which is guaranteed to disappoint.

Hope finds its potential to bring joy when hope is centered in the spiritual-eternal realm of life. Hope unleashes its horsepower within us for an explosion of holiday joy when that hope is placed in Jesus Christ, Son of God, our Savior.

At the time of the birth of Jesus three Magi saw a new configuration of stars in their homeland far east of Israel and concluded that the new star was the star of the Jewish king who was to be the Messiah. They immediately set out on a journey to find the king and worship him. The hope they held in their hearts must have been tremendous. They traveled a great distance with gifts fit for a king, enduring danger from robbers, wild animals and insensitive rulers. They traveled with expectation to Jerusalem because they hoped to see the King of Kings.

When the Magi arrived in Jerusalem ready to worship the new king they did not find a city excited and filled with hope. They did not find a celebration as they might have expected. What they did find was a despotic Herod and religious leaders who were merely disturbed by their news. The religious leaders of the day either did not believe in the coming of the Messiah or did not believe the time of the Messiah had yet come.

King Herod wanted precise information from the Magi so that he could eliminate his competition. They were sent on to Bethlehem alone to worship the newcomer, but they still hoped. On leaving Jerusalem the star appeared to them and "escorted" them directly to the home of Joseph, Mary and King Jesus. Their hope was rewarded. They worshiped the newborn king by giving themselves.

The hope of the Magi translated into real spiritual, fulfilling joy. Their hope did not disappoint. To have hope is to believe good things are going to happen—even when everything has the potential to turn out bad. But hope like that of the Magi is more than a mental exercise in optimism. It is hope in Jesus Christ, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords. Real hope is the transformation of the heart, soul and mind from the world of decay to the world of eternal spiritual life. To be totally immersed in hope is to believe Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary as the Son of God and to allow that belief to transform your life with hope for eternal life in God's presence, just as Jesus himself promised.

When pressure caves our world in and throws us into a tunnel-vision experience with despair, it is time to look out and see the Light of God, come as baby Jesus. It is shining just as brightly today as it did for the Magi nearly 2,000 years ago.

Will you hope with me this Christmas season for the soon return of Jesus as King? Will you hope with me for the salvation of your soul and the hope of eternal life? Will you simply invite Jesus to permeate your heart and transform your life—eternally?

Earl F. Cater is pastor at Eden Church, Inola, Okla. His address is Route 1, Box 319 A, Inola, OK 74036.

Prayer for Advent

Renee Sauder

Almighty God, Light of the World, in this season of Advent we remember that you are not a distant creator, but you are one who comes into our kind of world. You identify with us. The birth of Jesus reminds us that you share with us in the human experiences of life. By taking our body and flesh upon yourself in the story of Jesus' birth, you have sanctified human life as being a fit dwelling place for the divine. You have taught us that human life is sacred, human birth a miracle, because this is your way of coming into the world and coming into us. You live not in temples made by human hands, but in the lives you create.

Lord, we want this season of Advent to be more than following the circle of customs. We need celebration of that event; we need to become like children, full of wonder. Speak to us through the familiar Christmas scriptures, through the message of banners, through the music of the carols.

Come into our lives. Be born in us. Come, Lord Jesus, into our minds to illuminate our thoughts, to direct our thinking, to turn us to the truth. Come into our hearts to cleanse us from unrighteousness and to direct our affections to things that are above.

Come into our decisions, where the struggle of choosing between good and evil takes place. Come into our homes to direct our family life, that our homes may be places of peace and joy. Come into every part of our conference, that we may not stray from our mission but be doing your work here. Give us the vision, strength and will to *expect* and *live* in your dynamic, caring and brooding presence. Through the coming of Christ and through the commitment of our lives, reign among us on earth. Amen.

Renee Sauder is associate pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS 67117.

EDITORIAL

The strength of weakness

"Never doubt," Margaret Mead said, "that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

The genius of Christianity, and particularly of Anabaptism, says John Howard Yoder in *The Priestly Kingdom*, is that we can work for change in church and society through the formation of (to use Jesus' parable) leaven-like movements rather than attempted power plays.

While in Wichita, Kan., last year Yoder mentioned two examples of leaven: victim-offender mediation and the Lorraine Center (for adult day care at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church).

Last Dec. 11 the Eden Church (Moundridge, Kan.) youth fellowship met at "Bob's Super" to go shopping. They bought $150 worth of food for the McPherson Food Bank. Now who would think that a bunch of kids with $150 could make a dent in the United States' estimated 13 million children for whom poverty is a way of life?

Folks at Grace Community Church (on Rockwell Street in Chicago) have been feeding about 100 families weekly through their food pantry, which until October was housed at their church. Now they contribute food and money on a monthly basis to the pantry at another church in the same neighborhood. "The women who worked at the pantry," reports Bernice A. Kucinskas, "also gave out tracts to share the gospel." In addition, every Christmas the Grace people help staff a two-week, 24-hour-a-day Yule Connection, part of the city's crisis intervention program called Contact. Volunteers answer calls from people who want or need to talk—about heating problems, food or building needs, suicide, loneliness. Now who would think that these deeds would lighten the pathos of a city of 3.5 million?

East Swamp Mennonite Church (Quakertown, Pa.) regularly solicits hosts from the congregation for a "make-the-children-happy" program. Children from Philadelphia come to visit for a day. Can this bit of yeast "leaven the lump" of a sprawling metropolitan area?

Charleswood Church in Winnipeg and Oak Grove Church (Smithville, Ohio) are two of the many congregations who organize variations of "Guess who's coming to dinner?" (In some communities it's "faspa.") Can these gestures of hospitality truly improve the bonding among the 136,255,138* members of churches in Canada and the United States?

Next week I'll attend the consultation on Christian Peacemaker Teams in Techny, Ill., sponsored by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Council of Moderators and Secretaries. "The goal of CPT would be to witness to Jesus Christ as we seek to identify with the suffering, promote peace, reduce violence, identify with those caught in violence and oppression, and foster justice by using the techniques of non-violent direct action" (presented for discussion, January 1986). Some criticize the proposal as naive, as sending out young people to be killed, as making peace an end in itself. Our church leaders are in process of deciding whether Christian Peacemaker Teams are a "leaven" that we should consider using. Can it be that such a relatively weak gesture (in the face of the world's armies and arsenals) has promise?

Recently the youth of First Mennonite Church in Reedley, Calif., thanked the congregation for donating three tons of newspapers, which earned the Mennonite Youth Fellowship $160. Would you think that such an ecological effort makes a statement of respect for God's creation when compared to massive waste in our Western societies?

Cedar Community Mennonite Church (Cedar Falls/Waterloo, Iowa) asks its members to yearly review and renew their covenant. "The congregation begins again each year," they say, "and each person must choose to remain a member or become a member." Can it be that this decision of a small congregation to keep church membership fresh and meaningful affects the rest of us 65,000 or so in the General Conference Mennonite Church?

Advent says it again, and Paul understood it well: "The Lord said to me, '. . . My power is made perfect in weakness' " (2 Corinthians 12:9). That is bread enough for the journey. *mts*

**Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 1986*, p. 246.

THE MENNONITE

OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO ONE LAY THAN THAT IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST

101:24 DECEMBER 23, 1986

THE MENNONITE
staff

wishes all
readers the peace
and joy of God's
special presence in
your lives through Jesus.

He comes! He comes!
Again we hope, and forgive, and live.

PROLOGUE

The manger scene on the cover, re-enacted this time in Southern Africa, calls us to another global view of Christmas. The all-purpose conical straw hats (often made by one's parents) are a trademark of that area. Join in the awe of the ever-newness of "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord." This year pray also for "the city of John," Johannesburg, South Africa, that the Prince of Peace may reign there too.

In this issue Jacob Elias takes us to the sometimes unholy Holy Land and searches out some of the many layers of Christmas meaning, naming his exploration, surprisingly, "Exodus." Let him take you on that journey.

"Exodus" continues as Jim Klassen describes the journey of a Salvadoran brother and the "way station" provided for him by a Mennonite dentist and his family in Dallas, Texas.

Churchman Donovan E. Smucker next gives us an overview of the religious year. We raise an altar of repentance and thanksgiving as we exit the old year and move by the grace of God into 1987.

"Exodus" is completed in this issue with a celebration of the life and death of Michiko Takarabe of Japan. *mts*

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Credits: Cover, 576, COM; 559, 560 (bottom), 561, 563 (bottom), 564, RNS; 560 (top), Israeli Ministry of Tourism; 562 (computer), Larry Cornies; 562, Belair; 563 (top), Eric Rathke, *Newton Kansan*; 565, James Klassen; 566, Larry Tschetter; 567, Muriel T. Stackley; 569, Dale D. Gehman; 570, Brenda Suderman; 571 (top), Dave Linscheid; 571 (bottom), Paula Diller Lehman; 577, John Hiebert.

THE MENNONITE

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The Mennonite is a member of the Associated Church Press, Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse (a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group). It is an associate member of the Canadian Church Press.

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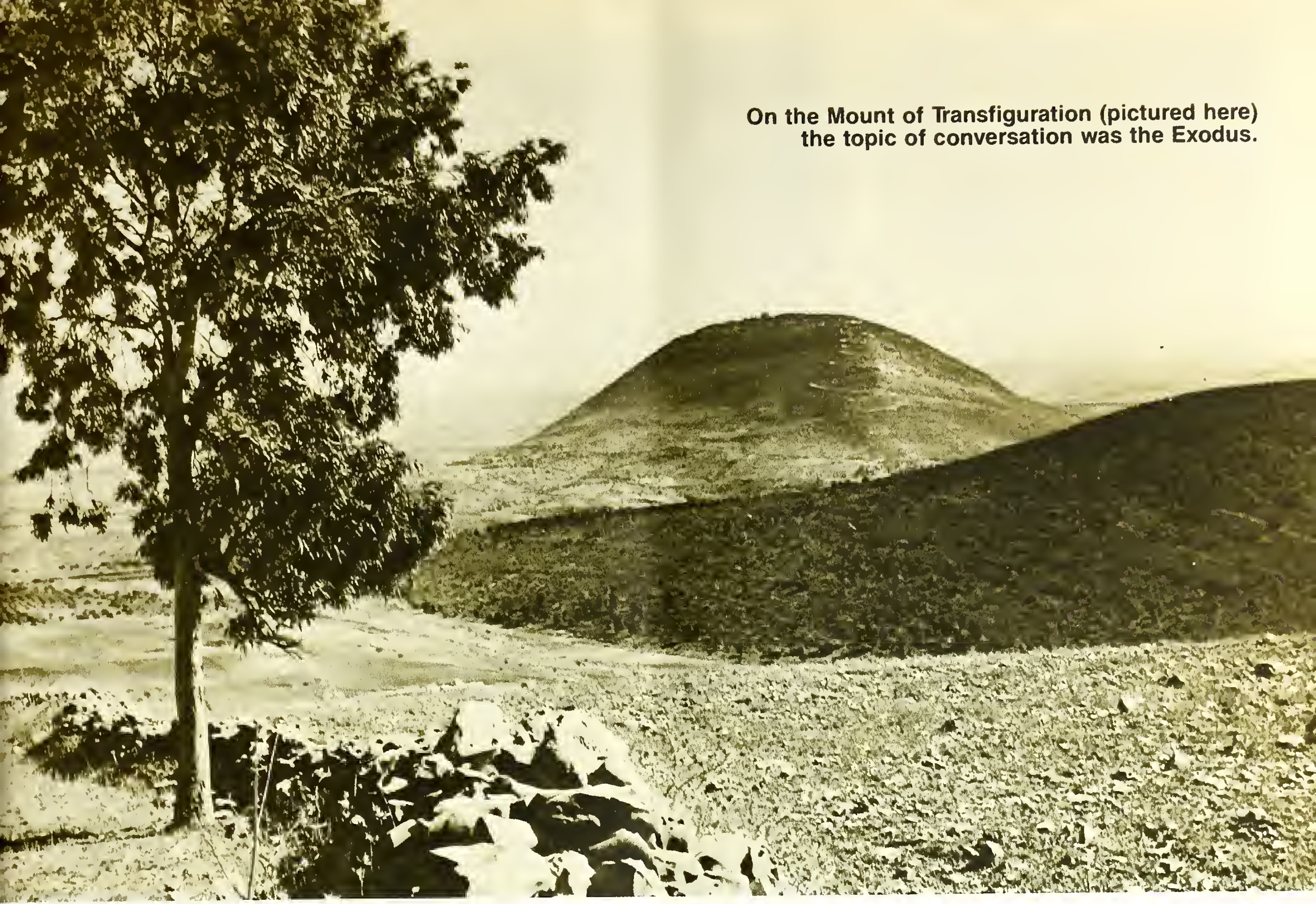
The Mennonite (ISSN 0025-9330) seeks to witness, teach, motivate and build the Christian fellowship within the context of Christian love and freedom under the guidance of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. It is published semimonthly by the General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Subscription rates: one year, $14.50 U.S., $16.50 Canada; two years, $26 U.S., $29 Canada; three years, $35 U.S., $39 Canada. Foreign subscriptions add 50 cents per year to U.S. rate. Second class postage paid at Newton, KS, and additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to *The Mennonite*, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.**



On the Mount of Transfiguration (pictured here) the topic of conversation was the Exodus.

Making straight in the desert a highway for our God

The new exodus

Jacob W. Elias

One of my memorable experiences during a sabbatical year in the Middle East occurred on a hill overlooking the city of Jericho.

We had traveled by bus along the ancient, narrow, winding road toward Jericho. Beside us were the spectacular canyons of Wadi Qelt. All around us we saw the Judean hills with their stark beauty.

We came to a cliff, from the top of which we could see the Jordan River Valley, the city of Jericho and the mountains on the other side of the Jordan. Here our tour guide switched on his battery-driven loudspeaker and his small cassette recorder, and we were treated to a piece from Handel's "Messiah."

The ruins of King Herod's fortress Kypros towered above us on a hill to our right. Israeli army bunkers were immediately behind us. In front of us we had a view of a Palestinian refugee camp in Jericho. Here we heard the rousing chords of the tenor recitative: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Musically this was nothing special. A taped rendition of this solo played on a small cassette recorder and amplified on a portable speaker is not like hearing a live performance in a concert hall. Yet for me, emotionally and spiritually, this was a powerful performance. During my later walks along that ancient path from Jerusalem to Jericho I always heard that rousing refrain in my soul.

In Luke's Gospel these words from Isaiah 40:3-5 are quoted as an interpretation of the ministry of John the Baptist. John also wandered in the wilderness of Judea. He baptized in the River Jordan. Here John also spoke critically about a later Herod and his domestic affairs. John's prophetic activity was the fulfillment of the words of the prophet Isaiah. His was the voice crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

According to Luke the outcome of that event announced by John would be that "every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (3:4-6).

This was the exodus which Jesus was about to accomplish through his death on the cross and his resurrection and exaltation.

كنيسة المهد
M. 500
CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY
حقل الرعاة
km. 3
SHEPHERDS FIELDS

In their original context in Isaiah 40 these words likely constitute the call of the prophet. Having been summoned into the heavenly court, as it were, to receive God's instructions, the prophet hears the command to preach a message of comfort to the Jewish people in their exile. They had suffered long enough. Now God was about to deliver them from their captivity in Babylon.

Several layers of meaning

The original fulfillment of this prophetic vision of deliverance came in 538 B.C. Following the victory of the Persian King Cyrus over the Babylonian kingdom came the edict that allowed the exiled Jewish people to return to their homeland. As in Egypt in centuries past, when God acted to set the enslaved Hebrew people free, so now God had again been at work in the affairs of the nations preparing the way for their exiled descendants to be released and returned.

One does not have to travel long in the Holy Land to realize how difficult it is to get from one place to another, especially in the hill country. In the prophet's vision of this new exodus from Babylon back to the Promised Land a road or highway is prepared for the people. The valleys are lifted up, and the mountains are brought low so that the people of God might flock back into the land. With God as their shepherd tenderly carrying the lambs and gently leading those that are with young, the people of God made their way through the deserts, across the valleys and over the hills back into Jerusalem.

This picture of God's renewed saving activity in a new exodus is vivid in the mind of the evangelist Luke when writing his Gospel. It is clear that the songs of Mary and Zechariah in Luke 1 utilize the vocabulary and themes of Scripture, especially the Exodus tradition.

Mary exults in God the Savior, the one who rescues: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my Spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:47). Mary's vision of salvation in the Magnificat (Luke 1:52) is reminiscent of the prophet's picture in Isaiah 40: "God has put down the mighty from their thrones." (Does this remind us of the lowering of the mountains?) "God has exalted those of low degree." (Is this not like the lifting up of the valleys?) The raising of the valleys and the humbling of the mountains in Isaiah's vision of a new exodus symbolically correspond to yet another exodus experience, the one accomplished by Jesus.

An Arab village near the old city of Jericho

On the Mount of Transfiguration Jesus met with Moses and Elijah, who talked with him (Luke 9:31). Their topic of conversation was the exodus (Luke 9:31). (The word "exodus" in the original language is unfortunately often translated "departure," which does not do justice to the rich meaning of the word.) This was not the Exodus led by Moses, through whom God set the Hebrew slaves free from their oppression in Egypt. This was the exodus that Jesus was about to accomplish through his death on the cross and his resurrection and exaltation.

Mary's Song, as recorded by Luke, uses scriptural language to praise the God who had repeatedly in the past and now again in Jesus acted to deliver the enslaved and to free the captives. So real and so dramatic was this vision of the new exodus accomplished in Jesus that the verbs are in the past tense. In other words the salvation was already seen as an accomplished fact, even though Jesus through whom God was about to save the people was yet to be born.

Needing a new exodus

For a year I lived among a people under occupation. For them the libera-

"I lived," says Jake Elias, "among a people under occupation. . . . I also lived among people whose relatives died at Auschwitz." This bus, in which 38 died and 76 were wounded, symbolizes the current conflict and tension.

The liberation about which Mary sang is still often just a dream.

tion about which Mary sang is still often just a dream or at best only partially realized. Military checkpoints are constant reminders to the Palestinians of their plight under occupation.

But I also lived among people whose relatives died at Auschwitz. The opportunity to come to this land in 1948 to establish the state of Israel must seem like another exodus miracle. The exiles from lands of the dispersion have been settled once again in that land which many Jewish people see as God's unfailing promise to them.

What do the visions of the new exodus in the call of the prophet Isaiah and the Song of Mary say to us living as we do in a world where so often the liberation of one people leads to the oppression of another?

There are those who read the Magnificat as an invitation to join in a revolution that will overthrow the party in power and bring about justice for the oppressed and provide food for the hungry. Unfortunately, however, revolutionary regimes that succeed in taking over power are often as repressive and corrupt as the ones they toppled.

There are others who read the Song of Mary in a metaphorical sense. The poor and the hungry are the spiritually poor or hungry who are spiritually nourished through Christ, even when their outer circumstances do not change.

But I read in Luke and the New Testament as a whole an invitation to see yet another way. In Jesus, the one crucified and raised, God shows how the humble are exalted and the proud are dethroned. God in Christ acts both to save and to judge. It is in the community of believers, who have themselves been freed from their captivities, that the vision of the new kingdom is lived out. The new exodus accomplished by Christ leads to a new community.

So real was Mary's vision of the new exodus that verbs are in the past tense, even though Jesus was yet to be born.

During this Christmas season we might ask to what extent our congregations embody this vision.

The fortunes of victims of a flood or fire begin to change for the better when Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers heed the call to give aid. Refugees fleeing El Salvador experience new hope when congregations offer sanctuary. Starving children in famine-stricken areas of the world may find their plight alleviated when those who have wealth put their means at the disposal of the church for programs of relief and self-help.

What will happen this Christmas season to bring to greater reality the vision of universal blessing available to all humankind? "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it" (Isaiah 40:5).

During the 1985-86 academic year Jacob W. Elias, dean and associate professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., was on sabbatical at the Ecumenical Institute for Theological Research at Tantur, near Jerusalem.

A survey of Protestantism

Looking back at '86

Donovan E. Smucker

It is obvious that North American Protestantism continues to be vigorous, varied and, at times, contradictory. The statistics are impressive with church membership keeping pace with population growth. *The Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* reveals less than 1 percent losses in the mainline U.S. churches, while the Pentecostal Assemblies of God grew by 2.19 percent. In Canada the five largest churches reported membership gains, except for loss of members in the Anglican (Episcopal) Church.

Data in both countries agree that women now constitute 25 percent of Protestant seminary enrollment and that per capita giving is slightly over $300.

The computer revolution has reached the Protestant churches. Los Angeles is the city where 400 people met under the title "Computer Assisted Ministry Conference—CAMCON." Churches have been using computers for years in the business department. The CAMCON conference explored "being on line," connecting computers by telephone so that users can converse with one another and share insights and information. In Denver the tragic explosion of the Challenger shuttle led a church computer network to go "on line" for discussion, prayers and a memorial service.

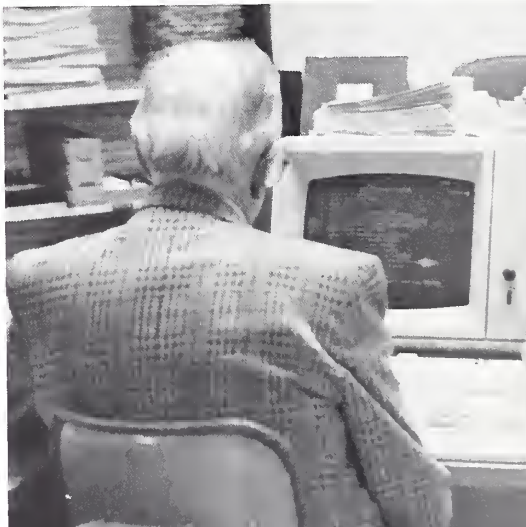
The arrival of computers has not suppressed the Protestant sense of history. In Geneva, Switzerland, the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in that city was celebrated for seven months. Hundreds of Reformed Christians from all over the world participated. More recent Protestant history in Europe was noted in West Germany, where Dietrich Bonhoeffer's family home was converted into a museum and study center. He was arrested in this house in 1943. In 1945, shortly before the end of the war, the Nazis executed him in a concentration camp. Bonhoeffer's 80th birthday was also celebrated this year.

At times Protestants appear like a great debating society wrestling with its conscience.

When the Presbyterian church (U.S.) met in Minneapolis, it elected Benjamin M. Weir as moderator. He is a veteran missionary held captive in Lebanon for 16 months by Shiite Muslims. The assembly then heard 16 Presbyterian members of Congress scold the church for involvement in liberal political causes. Despite the censure by the politicians, the Presbyterians voted to oppose any conscription laws that "would punitively process conscientious objectors" and limit the possibilities of alternative service.

The Methodist Federation for Social Action called on retired United Methodist ministers to burn their pension checks to protest their church board of pensions' continued investment in South African companies. In another development, the 58 United Methodist bishops signed a document that says a clear and unconditional *no* to nuclear war and nuclear weapons. The 30,000-word document was accompanied by a four-page digest that was read from all United Methodist pulpits.

Evangelicals are also developing a social conscience. Brian Stiller of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada de-



The computer revolution has reached the churches.

Frank H. Epp, 1930-1986

nounced the Church of Jesus Christ of Aryan nations as a "pseudo-church." The Aryans are a neo-Nazi group seeking to establish a camp in the Alberta foothills. Stiller said that "to identify vile bigotry with Jesus Christ can only cause confusion in the public mind." In the United States, Ronald Sider of Eastern Baptist Seminary is head of Evangelicals for Social Action and an outspoken advocate of peace and justice actions. *Sojourners* magazine is an evangelical journal that takes bold positions on peace and social justice questions.

Protestants have been in the courts in several different ways. Ronald McCaw, a United Church of Canada minister, sued his denomination for $350,000, claiming $200,000 in lost earnings, $100,000 for emotional stress and $50,000 in punitive damages because he was removed from the pastorate of the United Church in North Bay, Ont. His congregation was badly split over his style of leadership.

A more important and dramatic court case was the sanctuary trial in Tucson, Ariz., where 11 defendants were tried for conspiracy to violate immigration laws by housing and protecting refugees from Central American countries. The government hired spies to pose as church members in order to gain information. The case ended ambiguously when the defendants were found guilty but were not detained or jailed. New Mexico made the headlines when this Spanish-oriented state with a Hispanic governor declared the entire state a "sanctuary." The New Mexico Council of Churches supported the move. The council includes Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox.

In Mennonite life the major events were capped by the favorable vote in Ontario to integrate the two Swiss Mennonite conferences with the united district of the General Conference. This is likely the testing ground for the ultimate step of union on the North American level. Another ecumenical development was the conversations between the Reformed-Presbyterian churches and the Mennonites. Already these dialogues have led to a booklet to keep the large memberships informed.

The premature death of Frank H. Epp in Kitchener, Ont., came as a shock to the whole church, since he conveyed to everyone prodigious physical strength with an endless stream of solid books, crucial sermons and lectures, a major role in Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite World Conference executive committees along with a senior professorship at Conrad Grebel College.

The long, agonizing debate on homosexuality at the Saskatoon conference is still dominating the thinking of many delegates. Some are calling for reviews of personnel and policy at various levels of the conference. The Fellowship of Concerned Mennonites in Saskatchewan is another example of a conservative response dealing with other issues. However, the mainstream of the various conferences and MCC retains solid support.

Across the North American landscape are many small church-related Protestant liberal arts colleges. One of these institutions, Bethel College of North Newton, Kan., responded to the agricultural crisis in the Wheat Belt by announcing free tuition for farmers forced to abandon their farms and wanting to train for another vocation. Within weeks of the announcement Bethel had many inquiries for a free college education, and eight are currently enrolled.

Four of Bethel College's "farm aid students" are (left to right) Marlene Beeson, Bob Beeson, Randall Buttler, Marvin Holck. At right is Emerson Wiens, faculty adviser.

Meanwhile, a major struggle is emerging in American Protestantism in connection with politics. The attempt to link conservative Republican politics with fundamentalism is being tested in the world of politics. The first test was the Michigan primary in August, when Pat Robertson came in

In 1986 the Soviet Union announced new policy regarding churches. Here, in Darnitsa Baptist Church near Kiev, a congregation offers "Gospodie" (individual prayers) to the Lord.

SOJOURNERS
$2.50
On May 1 eight of these church workers providing sanctuary to Central American refugees were judged to be criminals and a "threat to society." Their work goes on
GUILTY
Of The Gospel

Benjamin M. Weir, missionary released from captivity in September 1985, was elected by his denomination to serve as moderator for one year.

The Hutterites have 250 colonies in North America.

second behind George Bush. In the primary of the fifth district of Michigan the fundamentalist incumbent Congressman was defeated by Fred Upton, a protégé of David Stockman. Jon Margolis of the *Chicago Tribune* referred to these developments as "backlash" against Christian politics. Some of the right-wing Protestants talked of forming a new party.

Jerry Falwell has changed the name of his activist organization from Moral Majority to the Liberty Federation. The organization has a $100 million budget. In Canada there isn't a right-wing ground swell, but observers point to the election of the millionaire immigrant from Holland, William N. Vander Zalm, as premier of British Columbia. A leading magazine in Canada printed his picture on the cover of the journal with the caption "Maverick power! A fundamentalist premier for British Columbia." Thus in one province Canadian voters affirmed the link between conservative politics and conservative religion.

The problems of the inner city are conspicuously absent from the current political agenda. In the '60s and '70s concern for the inner city flourished. These trends did not deter the planners of the Congress on Urban Ministry, which drew 800 ministers from 37 denominations to Chicago last summer. Although absent from most headlines, the conference revealed that these pastors and staffers are leading the inner-city church in new directions that are creative, faithful and effective. One of the key leaders, David Frenshak, said that the liberal-conservative division does not exist in the inner city. Poverty and social disorganization create a common ground for many different backgrounds of church, theology and ministry.

Beyond North America are many exciting developments. The Soviet Union announced a new policy last May that would permit a church to own property and to have ministers—including outsiders, even foreigners—conducting services. The new policy includes a reference to the participation of children in services. In the Soviet Union, Baptists and Mennonites have survived many bleak years of siege.

A new book, *Fidel and Religion*, signals a change of policy in Cuba. When Jesse Jackson was in Cuba, Castro attended a Methodist worship service in Havana where Jackson preached on Martin Luther King's birthday. It was the first church service Castro had attended in many years.

Elsewhere, in Korea, China, Zaire, Brazil, Argentina, sub-Sahara Africa, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Nicaragua, the Protestant churches are growing. But Nicaragua and other Central American nations are in perpetual fear of roving death squads.

Existing outside the usual range of denominations within Protestantism are the plain people and the Hutterites. The Amish make the news fairly often through conflicts with school policy, as in Berne, Ind., where they threatened to leave the schools if computers were used in teaching. The U.S. Supreme Court has exempted Amish but not independent fundamentalists from attending schools with state-certified teachers, which is to say, the Amish may have uncertified teachers in their own schools.

The Hutterites are the oldest communalists in the Christian church. They have 250 colonies in North America, including six of the more culturally sophisticated groups called the Bruderhof. In Farmington, Pa., 350 people live in the Bruderhof colony. The children may go to college, study classical music and enjoy an excellent library. All property is held in common. Their flourishing sale of kindergarten equipment creates the paradox of capitalistic "communists."

From the Amish one-room school in Lancaster, Pa., to Harvard Divinity School and from the Hutterites near Winnipeg to the University of Waterloo, the Protestant mosaic continues to flourish without a tight scenario. It is a movement, not a monolithic institution.

Donovan E. Smucker is professor emeritus in the social sciences and this semester is teaching a course entitled "Non-Violence and Political Reality" at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

Open house in Dallas

James R. Klassen

"My name is José Gonzales," he said with a smile. A translator rendered his words in English for the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship.

His smile faded. "I came from El Salvador because I wasn't able to live in peace there. While in school I was accused of being a guerrilla. Some people from the armed forces came to assassinate me, but I was able to run away. I'm in the United States now, but I hope to go to Canada."

José also shared his spiritual pilgrimage. "One day I meditated on a verse in Ecclesiastes, 'Remember God in the days of your youth. . . .' I want to learn more. Sometimes I become detoured; I ask for strength to do what is right." Then he concluded, "I wish that all who hear the Word of God may be happy. May God pour out his blessings on you so that you may always smile."

José is a refugee. But for political reasons the U.S. government does not admit or accept refugees from El Salvador. Beginning in his teens, however, José and his family experienced slander, verbal threats and attempts to kill him. He is in his mid-20s now, and he hopes that Canada will give him new opportunities.

While in Dallas, José stayed with Ed and Ruth Ward and their family. As active members of the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship, the Wards felt that welcoming José into their home was a part of their commitment to follow Christ and serve humanity. Ed serves as chair of the Dallas-based Mennonite International Refugee Assistance (MIRA) board.

Members of the Dallas Mennonite Fellowship founded MIRA in 1982 when they became aware that thousands of Central American refugees lived in Dallas. Fearing torture and death in their homelands (primarily El Salvador and Guatemala), the refugees in Dallas also feared arrest and deportation by the U.S. government. As a central focus through the efforts of two voluntary service workers, MIRA helps these refugees obtain permanent legal residence in Canada.

Opening their home to refugees has given the Ward family many precious memories. Providing sanctuary for temporary U.S. immigrants, however, has also brought awkward moments. Ed, a dentist, recalled the conversation when a well-to-do patient of his unexpectedly greeted him during the family farewell for José at the airport.

(Left to right) José Gonzales, Ed Ward, Ruth Ward with the Ward children

She was going to Ottawa on business.

"Our friend is also going to Canada," Ed said, hoping the lady wouldn't ask too many questions.

"Where's he from?" she asked.

"Central America."

"That's interesting. Which country?"

"El Salvador," Ed replied.

"Sure is a lot of trouble in that country. Thank goodness the government there is a friend of the United States. It is the El Salvador government that is on the side of the United States, isn't it?" She paused for an instant; Ed nodded. Then she referred directly to José again. "Which side was he on?"

"Neither."

"But you've got to be on one side or the other," the lady insisted. "I've never heard of any third side."

Ed explained, "José wasn't interested in 'sides.' He was studying in school so he could get a job, but then the Salvadoran army came and beat up his family when they couldn't find him."

"Is he legal?"

Ed did not answer that question directly. "It's legal for him to go to Canada."

Boarding time arrived. The Wards bid José farewell. By opening their home and their hearts, the Wards have had unexpected blessings and unexpected opportunities to share their perspective.

James R. Klassen, author of Jimshoes in Vietnam *(Herald Press, 1986), represented Dallas Mennonite Fellowship on the board of directors of MIRA—Mennonite International Refugee Assistance. He and his wife now live near Tulsa, Okla., where he teaches in a Christian high school. Their address is 4505 W. Toledo, Broken Arrow, OK 74012.*

Christian business people are called to be like "parts per million," where minute traces of certain elements have enormous influence, said Garry Loewen, a Manitoba pastor, at the Nov. 6-9 convention of Mennonite Economic Development Associates in Kitchener, Ont. The theme for the meeting was "Business and Church: in Search of Excellence," and 510 attended, representing 19 chapters in Canada and the United States. A 1987 budget of slightly over $1 million will go to small businesses in Haiti, Jamaica and Bolivia. One participant said he and his wife had recently lost their farm after several decades of farming. Now they devote their time to helping others who are going through similar crises. "It's only now that we feel really successful," he said. "It was a sobering comment," says Wally Kroeker, "suggesting that failure and excellence may have something in common."

Henry Enns, who previously served as director of the Mennonite Central Committee Canada Handicap Concerns Program, has begun working in the overseas department in the area of disabled people's concerns as they relate to MCC's international work. In many countries disabled people are denied services; in others they are refused entrance due to immigration policies based on medical criteria. In some countries, amputations and blindings are used as punishment, creating a new category of disabled people. Enns will help to create awareness of disability issues among MCC's overseas workers.

NEWS

Mennonite missions coming of age

Colombians planting church in coffee city

Armenia, Colombia (MWC)—An evangelistic campaign supported by the Colombian Mennonite churches has launched a church planting effort in Armenia, a city famous as a center for Colombia's coffee industry, reports Juvenal Pacheco, pastor of the congregation at nearby Ibagué.

"We have been concerned for Armenia for a long time," said Pacheco, noting that the effort came after weeks of planning, prayer, fasting and discussion.

A group of 12 people came from Ibagué to Armenia, capital of the department of Quindío, for several days of work in the evangelistic campaign in the city's western neighborhood of San Andrés.

"It should be noted that in this large sector of the city there are no other evangelical churches, not even Catholic churches," said Pacheco.

Special speaker for the campaign was Elías Muñoz, pastor of two Colombian Mennonite congregations, the Sinaí, and the Madrid congregations.

Ibagué Mennonite Church

IGLESIA CRISTIANA
MENONITA

Glendon Klaassen and Juvenal Pacheco

"With the use of a community hall, music and sound equipment, and films, and building on a nucleus of Mennonites who live in Armenia, the work was begun despite the downpours that came during the hours of meeting," commented Pacheco. Despite the inclement weather and electrical outages, the campaign went forward, and some 10 people professed their desire to give over their lives to Jesus Christ.

A children's meeting on Saturday, Sept. 20, had an attendance of 30, followed the next day by the first full worship service of the emerging congregation.

Said Pacheco, "The Mennonite Church of Ibagué has considered it a privilege to assume the expense of this effort. We all consider it a privilege to pray daily for this new work and for the people who are giving leadership to it."

Glendon Klaassen, Commission on Overseas Mission secretary for Latin America, says, "We have seen an increase in evangelism efforts in Colombia in the last two to three years. The Colombian churches are coming of age. They are more sure of their identity and mission in the world, and they have dynamic leadership."

Contributions to the General Conference Mennonite Church as of Nov. 30 are down $217,000 compared to last year at the same time, according to Vern Preheim, general secretary. "The problem of less giving is compounded by the weak Canadian and U.S. dollar overseas. It is costing us more to support missionary work," said Preheim. In order to meet its 1986 budget the conference needs a 16.6 percent increase over last fiscal year's giving during December and January. Contributions may be sent to the General Conference Mennonite Church, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Following a thorough examination on Dec. 1 and 4, Kenneth G. Bauman, president of our conference, received word the second week in December that he has cancer of the stomach. After the tests he preached at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., where he is lead pastor, attended a performance of Handel's "Messiah," then left for four days in the Pacific District Conference. He had asked his wife, Mary, to tell him the results of the tests only after completing planned travel to Paso Robles and Reedley, Calif., and Ritzville, Wash., on behalf of the conference's development plan.

The United Church of Canada has for the first time elected a laywoman as its moderator, the highest elective office in the denomination. Anne Squire, 65, won out over six other candidates in recent balloting at a General Council meeting in Sudbury, Ont. She will serve a two-year term as head of the one-million-member church, which is Canada's largest Protestant denomination.

Saskatchewan Mennonites gather to study the Bible

Rosthern, Sask.—Obeying one of invited leader Erland Waltner's nine principles of biblical interpretation, about 150 "servants of the Word" came to Rosthern Junior College Nov. 20-21. "We discern in community," said Waltner, "with an openness to each other, whether we are right or wrong. No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of private interpretation (2 Peter 1:20, 21). The Holy Spirit teaches us."

The subject assigned to Waltner, Bible professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., who described himself as a fellow learner, was "Principles of Biblical Interpretation." The texts for applying those principles were those pertaining to the role of women in the church and those dealing with sexuality.

As questions emerged from discussion groups, someone asked, "How long must we dialogue before we come to consensus?"

"I wish I knew," answered Waltner.

A pastor asked, "When do we say 'Thus saith the Lord' and when do we discern with the community?" Benno Klassen added, "Sometimes we feel as if we have lost our clout."

"Sometimes we are prophets," said Waltner, "and sometimes listeners. I affirm dialogue *and* leadership."

Though sexuality was the first area of application, homosexuality received the focus. Choosing his words carefully, Waltner began with, "Jesus Christ is Lord of all sex relationships" and went on to say that face-to-face encounter on the subject is better than "talking" in our periodicals. He expressed concern that discussion at Saskatoon '86 simply encouraged the gay community to go home and close the closet door. He affirmed the clarity of the statement adopted at Saskatoon '86, restating that "genital sexual activity outside of convenanted heterosexual marriage is short of God's vision and therefore, as I understand it, sin. . . ."

Questions included, "Are practicing sinners Christians? First John 4 states that one who is born again does not sin," and, "If we confront in the spirit of Matthew 18, we must follow through to a conclusion. What about church discipline?"

"Only God knows," said Waltner in answer to the first question, "and God also knows the direction in which a person is moving." As to Matthew 18, he said, this must be applied to the whole catalog of sins.

Homosexuals Anonymous, he said, has been quoted as saying that churches are so judgmental that it's hard for people who want help to come forward. "My message to the church," said Waltner, "is, 'Curb your judgmentalism,' and my message to gays is, 'There is hope.' "

Waltner's personal experience with women in ministry provided winsome testimony. He listed the women evangelists he heard in the Freeman, S.D., area when growing up; being taught by female theologians in school; marrying a Free Methodist, a group that long ago ordained women; working with Mrs. P. R. Schroeder as a colleague in ministry in Mountain Lake, Minn.; searching the Scriptures before participating in the ordination of Anne Neufeld Rupp. "One of my daughters is an ordained missionary," ended Waltner, "and now my pastor is a woman, Marcia Yoder Schrock, and I am a deacon."

Asked about the difficult passages, he said, "There were specific local sinful conditions." Remember, Ephesus was the city of Diana. Corinth was a center of Aphrodite. The economic base was worship of the goddess. Christians in these cities came out of this.

Sandra Loewen, Saskatoon, expressed sadness at gifts not used. Linda Nickel asked how much we can assume about women being active in the first-century church. Ferd Ediger, Regina, said that one criterion should be the way the early church applied Scripture. Bernie Thiessen asked how we know which Scriptures are central—the "umbrella passages." Irvin Schmidt, Laird, said that where we're coming from influences which we make the key passages. Joanne Epp, Saskatoon, said there is significance—cultural factors—in Jesus' appointing 12 men to be apostles.

Ingrid Peters-Fransen, Regina, reminded the group of the sacrifices made by women and children to have men in ministry. Corny Martens, Rabbit Lake, came to the microphone saying, "I am in a discussion group with seven women, and they appointed me leader."

Naomi Unruh, Rabbit Lake, asked, "How can women not be a threat? We are perceived as pushy. How can men help each other to accept women leaders? A woman might be articulate and therefore a threat, yet that is her gift."

Said Waltner, "It's a matter of developing trust relationships."

David Neufeld, Herschel, asked, "What education was available to women in the first century?"

Waltner: "Very little." *Muriel T. Stackley*

The Commission on Overseas Mission is inviting interested young people (college age) to participate in a summer '87 missions service assignment in Colombia. Anyone interested may contact Peter Voran, COM, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, (316) 283-5100.

Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, Man., celebrated its 25th anniversary Oct. 26 with a service of thanksgiving. John Braun, the current pastor, led the celebration. Art L. Baerg paid tribute to its first pastor, G. S. Rempel. Former pastors Leonard Epp and Peter G. Sawatzky addressed the group. Of the 45 charter members, 11 are deceased and 25 were able to attend. The membership is now 216.

Despite the violence and terrorism that produced anxiety in Paris, thousands of people packed the Bercy Sports Stadium there for the Mission France meetings with Billy Graham, also broadcast live by TV satellite to 31 other cities in France. Local organizers were surprised by the attendance at the eight-day crusade. Despite security checks for everyone entering the stadium (a first for any Graham crusade), attendance at Bercy averaged over 12,500 each night. By the end of the week 7,094 had come forward at Graham's invitation to accept Christ.

Winnipeg Vietnamese Mennonite Church commissions pastor

Winnipeg—Ever since the first group of Vietnamese came here in 1975, Mennonites have been befriending them. Since 1979, 7,000-8,000 Vietnamese and Vietnamese Chinese have arrived in Manitoba. Approximately 2,000 of these are true Vietnamese and were without their own Vietnamese pastor and church until now.

In 1982 Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba started giving support to James and Rebecca Duong, who had come from Prince George, B.C., to study at Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg. James did a lot of visiting among refugees, got involved in Bible study groups and generally gathered more and more Vietnamese and Vietnamese Chinese believers around him.

In 1983 a Vietnamese and Chinese church was started. Even though most of the preaching was done in Vietnamese, with translation into Cantonese or Mandarin, the Chinese identified much more with James and Rebecca and the church. James and Rebecca are Chinese, and though they were well versed in Vietnamese culture and language by 1985, the true Vietnamese were feeling less and less at home. Membership was at approximately 55 for this Vietnamese and Chinese congregation. The Duongs had worked hard and given good leadership, but some things were difficult.

In April 1985 some of the Vietnamese insisted that they wanted to start their own church. They felt there were three other Chinese churches in Winnipeg and it was time, for cultural and language reasons, to have a Vietnamese church. This would be the only way the needs of the many Vietnamese could be met. The need for separate services and congregations became clear.

MCC Manitoba had remained the main funding body, although four other Mennonite groups had become involved and gave substantial support. Home Street Mennonite Church, having hosted the congregation since 1983, affirmed the young church.

The advisory council, made up of representatives from MCC, the Mennonite Brethren Church, the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference and Evangelical Mennonite Conference, agreed to work toward separate congregations, and the larger conferences have been asked to become the sponsoring groups for the beginning of 1987.

During 1986 the council agreed to find a Vietnamese pastor, and all the funding bodies would remain with the two congregations and the two pastors until the end of 1986. The Chinese members voted to ask the Mennonite Brethren Church for sponsorship, and the Vietnamese voted to ask the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba for sponsorship. CMM and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada will fund the pastor's salary for the first Vietnamese Mennonite congregation in Manitoba. The Lord has blessed the peaceful separation of the two congregations step by step. Both congregations have had noticeable growth since August, when they began separate services and ministries.

Binh Nguyen

The young Vietnamese pastor, Binh Nguyen, came from Columbia Bible College, Clearbrook, B.C. He took up his pastoral work in August and continues his studies at Canadian Mennonite Bible College. Binh Nguyen was commissioned as pastor of the newly formed Vietnamese Mennonite Church on Sept. 28. James Duong was in charge of the service, with conference minister John F. Wiebe officiating.

Both the Chinese and Vietnamese choirs and the four supporting conferences as well as MCC Manitoba participated. The service was one of celebration and new commitment. *Ernest Wiebe*

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The most visible evidence of a "new day" for church-state relations in Cuba is the publication of the book *Fidel y la Religion* (*Fidel and Religion*), a series of interviews with Fidel Castro conducted by a Brazilian Dominican priest, Frei Betto, in May 1985. It has been a runaway best-seller in Cuba. In it Fidel speaks with appreciation of his religious upbringing and the values he learned from the church. He also speaks of the problems created by the Catholic Church's past identification with the repressive forces in Cuba yet of the potential for the church's participation in helping create a new society.

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., celebrated the centennial of the church's building on Nov. 23. Built in the Dutch Mennonite style and remodeled in 1928, the sanctuary shell of the original church remains part of the present structure. For 12 years prior to 1886 the congregation worshiped in one or both of the immigrant houses built by the Santa Fe Railroad. Some lumber from the immigrant house is within the walls of the present structure.

The Commission on Home Ministries, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, has blue, two feet by four feet, all-weather aluminum signs decorated with the General Conference logo. There is room for the name of the local church, its location, perhaps a directional arrow or a word of welcome. The signs cost $25-$30 each, depending on the amount of lettering. Shipping costs need to be added.

Ag crisis meeting planned in Oklahoma

North Newton, Kan. (MCC)—Farmer/lender mediation, farm families in crisis and assistance with counseling and training service will be among the topics discussed at a gathering of farmers, pastors, church leaders and other concerned people to be held at the Fairview (Okla.) Mennonite Brethren Church Jan. 17, 1987, beginning at 3 p.m. and closing at 8:30 p.m.

Max Glenn, executive director of the Oklahoma Conference of Churches and AG-LINK, Oklahoma City, is the keynote speaker at the evening session. "Good News for Hard Times" is the title of his message.

"The Farm Crisis Among Mennonites" will be the topic introduced by Lester Ewy at the afternoon session. Lester and Winifred Ewy are Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Farm Community Issues coordinators and have been farming at Partridge, Kan.

Four workshops in the afternoon will feature the following topics and leaders: "Women and Children in Crisis," Winifred Ewy, Partridge, Kan.; "Farmer/Lender Mediation," Fred Loganbill, mediation consultant, Newton, Kan.; "Our New Life Begins Today," Roger Ediger, farmer, Enid, Okla., and "Evaluation and Accounting Assistance," Mike Bonnett, Oklahoma State University extension, Stillwater, Okla.

A meal will be available for a contribution at the host church at 6 p.m. There will not be a registration fee, expenses covered by an offering.

"Christian Approach to the Agricultural Crisis" is the overall theme of the meeting sponsored by MCC's farm crisis committee in Oklahoma. Members of the committee are John Voth, Meno, chair; Dennis Slagell, Weatherford, secretary; Marvin Dester and Carl Hohmann, Deer Creek; Ruben Thesman, Kremlin; Bill Toews and David Plett, Enid; Walter Unruh, Lahoma; Ernest Friesen, Fairview; and Dwight and Luella Unruh, North Enid. They are joined by David Habegger and Griselda Shelly, North Newton, Kan.

Illinois Mennonites focus on Christ's peace

Hopedale, Ill.—Expecting to number about 400, nearly 600 Mennonite Church and General Conference churchgoers in Illinois attended the joint fall conference Nov. 14-15.

"Shalom: Living Christ's Peace" was the theme for the weekend. Ron Sider was the main speaker. Congregational singing was led by Willis Litwiller and Betty Hochstetler. Worship and devotional leaders were Dick Blackburn, Rich Litwiller, Tricia Reimer, Caroline Schertz and Scott Weins. Alfreda Burke, the Lombard Mennonite Youth Fellowship and Sound of Praise choir provided special music.

Twenty-two learnshops focused on, for example, "Stress That Destroys and Peace That Heals" by Ron Ropp, "Violence and Non-Violence in the Third World" by Melba Maggay, "Christian Peacemaker Teams" by Ron Sider, "What About the Russians?" by Dick Blackburn, "Roots of Our Farm Crisis" by Norman Ewert, "Dating and Peer Conflicts" by Sanford Yoder, "Draft Registration and Christian Conscience" by Gordon Hoffert and Enten Eller and "Peacemaking Careers and Service Opportunities" by Carol Rose.

About 100 children, nursery through grade 8, enjoyed singing, crafts and games.

Host churches were Boynton Mennonite (GC) and Hopedale Mennonite (MC). The planning committee began preparations last January. The lack of space became minor as participants clearly conveyed strong interest in reaching world peace. *Amy Springer*

Jo Ropp, Normal, Ill., shows available material in "Peace Education in the Church."

A catalog giving detailed descriptions of the projects to be funded through the General Conference Mennonite Church development plan A Call to Kingdom Commitments has been sent to every conference church with a request that the catalog be put in the church library. Church members are encouraged to review the catalog. A second copy has been sent to each conference pastor, along with a pastor and leader's guide.

The Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship Conference will be held at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., Feb. 5-7, 1987. Students from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ colleges in Canada and the United States will attend the conference, held yearly to give students an opportunity to dialogue and share ideas on practical Christian peacemaking. This year's theme is "Militarism: Its Causes and Effects—a Christian Response." For more information contact Robert Flaming, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6, (519) 885-0220.

Fourteen teachers of English left for Beijing Aug. 18 to begin assignments with China Educational Exchange, a Mennonite agency. The 14 new teachers are Dustin Anderson, Santa Barbara, Calif.; Frank Isaac, Winnipeg; Grace Bergey, Hatfield, Pa.; Winnifred Braun, Calgary; Laura Kurtz, Elverson, Pa.; Janet Gehman, Strasbourg, Pa.; David King and Becky McLaughlin, West Fork, Ark.; Al and Irene Yoder, Hesston, Kan.; Sara Dorow, Osage, Iowa; John and Janet Groen, Waterloo, Ont.; and Pearl Sensenig, Newmanstown, Pa. Ken Klippenstein, Swift Current, Sask., will join them in February 1987.

'MCI Centennial Project' approved in principle

Gretna, Man.—"If there were to be one generation with no church schools, our Mennonite heritage would no longer exist." With this stirring opening, Mennonite Collegiate Institute board chairman Armin Ens set the tone for this year's annual meeting here Nov. 15.

The name "MCI Centennial Project" has been given to the school's proposal for three areas of centennial celebration—the commissioning of musical and historical works for the 1990 anniversary celebrations, the renovation of the existing auditorium into a 320-seat performing arts theater and the construction of a new residence. The MCI Centennial Project was approved in principle by delegates from the MCI's 23 constituency churches. The near-capacity attendance at the meeting, together with the 95 percent affirmative vote on the proposed project, gave evidence of the optimism and enthusiasm with which MCI's board, administration and staff are approaching the future. The projected cost of the MCI Centennial Project is just under $3 million.

Prior to the business sessions at the meeting, Jake Harms, Canadian coordinator of the Commission on Overseas Missions, addressed delegates and interested school supporters on the importance of striving, in a Christian education setting, to unapologetically advocate a Christian world view and to foster in students a sense of Christian peoplehood.

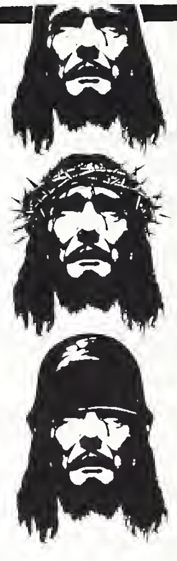
The MCI Centennial Project now goes back to MCI's society churches, alumni, staff and students for further discussion. After review and refinement, the proposed project will be brought before the delegate body—likely at next year's annual meeting—for final approval. A decision as to dates for implementing the three phases of the project will likely also be made at the annual meeting Nov. 21, 1987. *Tim Wiebe*

Walnut Receiving Home opens after renovations

Walnut Receiving Home, located in Winnipeg's inner city, opened its doors again in September after extensive renovations. The building has been remodeled to include a one-family suite on the second floor and four bedrooms on the main floor. The building can now accommodate 14 guests. In addition to the renovations, upgrading to meet fire regulations prompted the installation of metal fire doors, a fire-alarm system and the reworking of the electrical system.

Walnut Receiving Home is a temporary residence for Native people from northern Manitoba traveling to Winnipeg for medical services. It is owned and operated by the Native Ministries board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Maria Guenther (right) with guest at Walnut Receiving Home



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PEACE IT TOGETHER

A Mennonite Brethren congregation located in a poverty-stricken area of Montevideo, Uruguay, has taken to meeting in homes after repeated episodes of vandalism and verbal threats. MB missionaries Frank and Esther Martens report, "Frightened and discouraged as they surveyed smashed doors, windows and scattered furniture (in the church building), the believers met for an hour of fervent prayer before working long into the night moving benches, doors and books into a distant storage shed for safekeeping. Flying stones and verbal threats hurried their progress." The church is now looking for new property.

Dutch church representatives concerned about the use of tax monies for military purposes have formed a committee to sponsor preparation of a proposed initiative-law providing for conscientious objection in this matter, reports *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad*, the Dutch Mennonite weekly newspaper. "Millions of Dutch are already speaking out for a peace policy and against the continuing installation of nuclear weapons," the article states. "However, the government is moving toward placement of a new generation of nuclear weapons and increases in the defense budget."

Early registration is encouraged for the 10 Mennonite Marriage Encounter weekends scheduled for 1987: Jan. 23-25 in McPherson, Kan.; Jan. 30-Feb. 1 in Montpelier, Ohio; Feb. 6-8 in Glendive, Mont.; Feb. 13-15 in Peoria, Ill.; Feb. 20-22 in Salem, Ore.; March 6-8 in Niagara Falls, Ont.; March 27-29 in Winona Lake, Ind.; April 3-5 in Lethbridge, Alta.; April 10-12 in Canadensis, Pa., and April 24-26 in Concordia, Kan.

Second phase of development plan takes shape

Chicago (GCMC)—Staff members charged with the responsibility of providing leadership to the General Conference Mennonite Church development plan, A Call to Kingdom Commitments, met here Nov. 25-26.

Jim Gingerich, congregational campaign director and director for the Western United States; Rudy Regehr, campaign director for Canada; Mark Weidner, campaign director for the Eastern United States; and Dave Linscheid, General Conference communications director, spent two days planning the second phase of the development plan, which will involve a congregational campaign.

The campaign will take place in spring 1987, culminating on Dedication Sunday, April 5, and Commitment Sunday, April 12, when church members will be challenged to make new commitments to prayer, service and giving to the General Conference.

Left to right: James Gingerich, Rudy Regehr, Mark Weidner

The monetary goal of the development plan is $17.5 million, to be raised through an advanced gift phase in fall 1986 and the congregational campaign in spring 1987.

Plans for contacting every member through a network of volunteers were reviewed. Area coordinators in each district or province are currently being recruited. Volunteers will also be recruited to coordinate efforts in each congregation so that every member of the conference is given an opportunity to support the conference through the development plan.

Members will be encouraged to stretch their normal giving to the conference during the next three years to help fund special, above-budget projects that include evangelism, church planting, leadership development and Christian education.

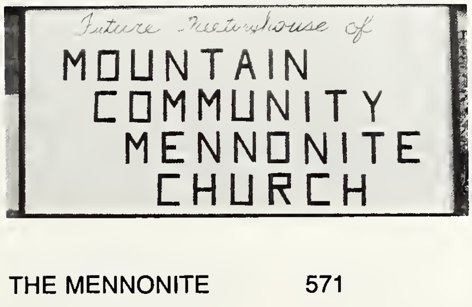
"This campaign is going to be one of the most unifying efforts that has happened in the General Conference. As I am in contact with congregations, pastors and people working with the development plan, I find that they are inspired and eager to give more volunteer time and financial support to our conference," commented Gingerich.

The development plan was approved by the delegates to the triennial conference in Saskatoon in July.

Mennonite Men approve $27,000 grant for Colorado church

Newton, Kan. (GCMC)—The board of the Mennonite Men of the General Conference Mennonite Church at its fall meeting Nov. 22 approved a grant of $27,000 to aid the building of a new meetinghouse for the Mountain Community Mennonite Church, Palmer Lake, Colo.

The Palmer Lake congregation is four years old and has been renting a chapel in a former campground for its services. The members hope to meet in the new church building by March 1987. Mennonite Men of the Western District Conference has made an appeal for volunteers to help with the construction of the church.



Mennonite Men helps new congregations build or acquire meeting places through its Tenth Man Program. The program's 360 members have raised $126,105 in the last three years to assist congregations such as the Chinese Mennonite Church in San Francisco. A letter requesting a $100 donation for the Palmer Lake project is being sent to each Tenth Man participant.

In other action, the General Conference Mennonite Men's executive committee planned a meeting for March 7, 1987, for Mennonite Men representatives from each area conference in the United States and Canada. This kind of meeting has not been held for several decades and is part of a plan to revitalize Mennonite Men. After a report by Irvin D. Voth, president of Mennonite Men, on the possibility of hiring a part-time staff person for the organization, it was agreed that potential candidates for the position, as well as how it might be funded, would be discussed at the March meeting.

The Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan and the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta held a joint delegate session Oct. 18 regarding Swift Current (Sask.) Bible Institute. Delegates decided on joint ownership of the school by the two conferences. Each year there will be a joint delegate conference to deal with constitutional changes, economic concerns and other school issues. The finance committee presented a plan to retire the capital debt, which is $378,000. This passed.

The ninth annual National Safety Sabbath will be observed Feb. 12-15, 1987. This safety awareness campaign, sponsored and coordinated by the (U.S.) National Safety Council's Religious Activities Department, is an ecumenical celebration that brings together worshipers of all faiths to prevent accidents and save lives. "Love thy Neighbor, Help Prevent Accidents" is the theme. This year's topics are (1) drinking and driving among the nation's youth, (2) proper use of medications by older adults and (3) importance of use and maintenance of smoke detectors.

"My faith in God was never stronger than during the time our farm was being foreclosed, but my feeling of oneness with the church never weaker." This statement, coming from some experiencing severe financial losses, is also heard from Christians going through the trauma of death, divorce or even illness, writes Katie Funk Wiebe in the *Gospel Herald* (Sept. 30 issue). At a farm crisis seminar sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee in Hillsboro, Kan., in late August, Lois Preheim of Aurora, Neb., said, "Hope comes when we sense our loss does not really impoverish us."

workers

Walt Braun, pastor at Mount Royal Church, Saskatoon, for the last 10 years, has accepted a call to be chaplain at the Mennonite Nursing Home in Rosthern, Sask., effective in the fall of 1987.

Jane and *Orlando Bueckert*, Eyebrow (Sask.) Church, have begun four-month Mennonite Central Committee terms in Ephrata, Pa., where they are working with SELFHELP Crafts. He received a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Her parents are Ann and Pete Wiebe of Sonningdale, Sask. His mother is Anne Bueckert of Saskatoon.

J. Herbert Fretz, coordinator of church and seminary relations at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Ind., is retiring this month.

Ralph Graber began as interim pastor Oct. 12 at Fort Worth (Dallas) Church.

Ray and *Sonja Gyori-Helmuth*, Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., have begun three-year MCC terms in Valladolid, Honduras. Ray is an agricultural extensionist and Sonja is a health and nutrition educator. Both received bachelor's degrees from Goshen (Ind.) College, she in nursing and he in business and secondary education. His parents are David and Naomi Helmuth of Middlebury, Ind. Hers are Grace and Tom Gyori of Chicago.

Larry Grunden has been serving as interim pastor at Trenton (Ohio) Church prior to a recent decision to make it an ongoing term.

Keith Harder is the interim co-pastor with *Cay Siebert* at First Church, Hillsboro, Kan.

Bueckerts

Heese

Nickel

Gyori-Helmuths

Gredi and *Homer Janzen*

Karen Heese, Steinbach (Man.) Church, has begun a two-year MCC term in Scarborough, Ont., where she is a community worker with Teesdale Community Center. She received bachelor's degrees in theology from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and in religious studies from the University of Waterloo, Ont. Her parents are Heinz and Justina Heese of Steinbach.

Dennis Hollinger, associate professor of church and society at Alliance Theological Seminary, Nyack, On-the-Hudson, N.Y., has been appointed by the AMBS board as associate professor of preaching, and church and society, effective July 1, 1987.

Paul and *Beryl Isaak*, Menno Church, Ritzville, Wash., have resigned, effective Jan. 31, 1987.

Gredi and *Homer Janzen*, Rosthern (Sask.) Church, have begun three-year MCC terms in Nepal. Gredi is a community worker and Homer a surgeon. Homer has a specialty degree in general surgery from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Ottawa. Their children are Gordon, Enid, Bonita Friesen and Patsy. His mother in Nettie Janzen of Waldheim, Sask.

Margaret and *John Janzen*, Arnaud (Man.) Church, have begun six-month MCC terms in Akron and Ephrata, Pa. John is a driver at MCC headquarters and helps with reconstruction on the SELFHELP Crafts warehouse. Margaret works with SELFHELP Crafts.

"To refuse ordination to women is to maintain that God does not call women to ministry, and we believe the Bible disproves that," asserts Kenneth S. Kantzer in the Oct. 3 issue of *Christianity Today*. Referring to 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Corinthians 14, he states that "neither mentions ordination nor remotely hints that the biblical author has ordination in mind. Ordination is the formal recognition by a church of God's call to ministry." Kantzer is dean of the Christianity Today Institute and former editor of *Christianity Today*.

RECORD

Kenagy, Sider

Waldo Kaufman has been serving as interim pastor at Calvary Church, Liberal, Kan., prior to a recent decision to make it a three-year term beginning Dec. 1.

Karen Kenagy, Albany, Ore., will be working for one year as assistant secretary in MCC's Latin America/Caribbean office. *Rich Sider* will oversee administration for the MCC program in South America and the Caribbean and continue responsibilities from Central America. Assisting Sider and Kenagy is *Mary Ann Krehbiel*, First Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan.

Robert and *Nancy Koehn* are the new interim pastoral leadership team at the Indian churches in Oklahoma: Bethel Church, Hammon; Koinonia Church, Clinton; Indian Church, Seiling; and Zion Church, Canton.

Stephen Lee has resigned as pastor at Vancouver Chinese Church and is employed by the Mennonite Brethren conference in church planting in Regina.

Elizabeth Nickel, Peace Church, Vancouver, has begun a two-year MCC term at MCC Canada headquarters in Winnipeg as administrative secretary in the overseas department. Her husband is Ken. Her parents are John and Kay Riediger of Whiterock, B.C.

Cook/housekeeper needed. Position begins **Jan. 1.** Responsibilities include cooking and cleaning for a year-round camp and retreat center. Salary/stipend negotiable.

For more information contact Curt Bechler, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031, (616) 476-2426.

Year-round resident-director team required for spring '87 at Camp Koinonia near Boissevain, Man. Couple preferred. Job includes maintenance, food service, hosting of rental groups, camp promotion, outdoor education, involvement in summer camp program, etc. Application deadline is **Dec. 31**.

For more information, write or call:
Monica Wiebe
Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba
202-1483 Pembina Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C9
(204) 477-0873.

The Eigenheim Mennonite Church of Rosthern, Sask., requires the service of a pastor. Membership approximately 165.

Send resume and/or inquiries to: Dave Klaassen, Box 550, Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0.

Year-round resident director team required for spring '87 at Camp Moose Lake, approximately 140 miles southeast of Winnipeg (near Sprague). Couple preferred. Job includes maintenance, food service, hosting of rental groups, camp promotion, outdoor education, involvement in summer camp program, etc. Application deadline is **Jan. 30, 1987.**

For more information, write or call Monica Wiebe at the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba, 202-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C9, (204) 477-0873.

The Conrad Grebel Review

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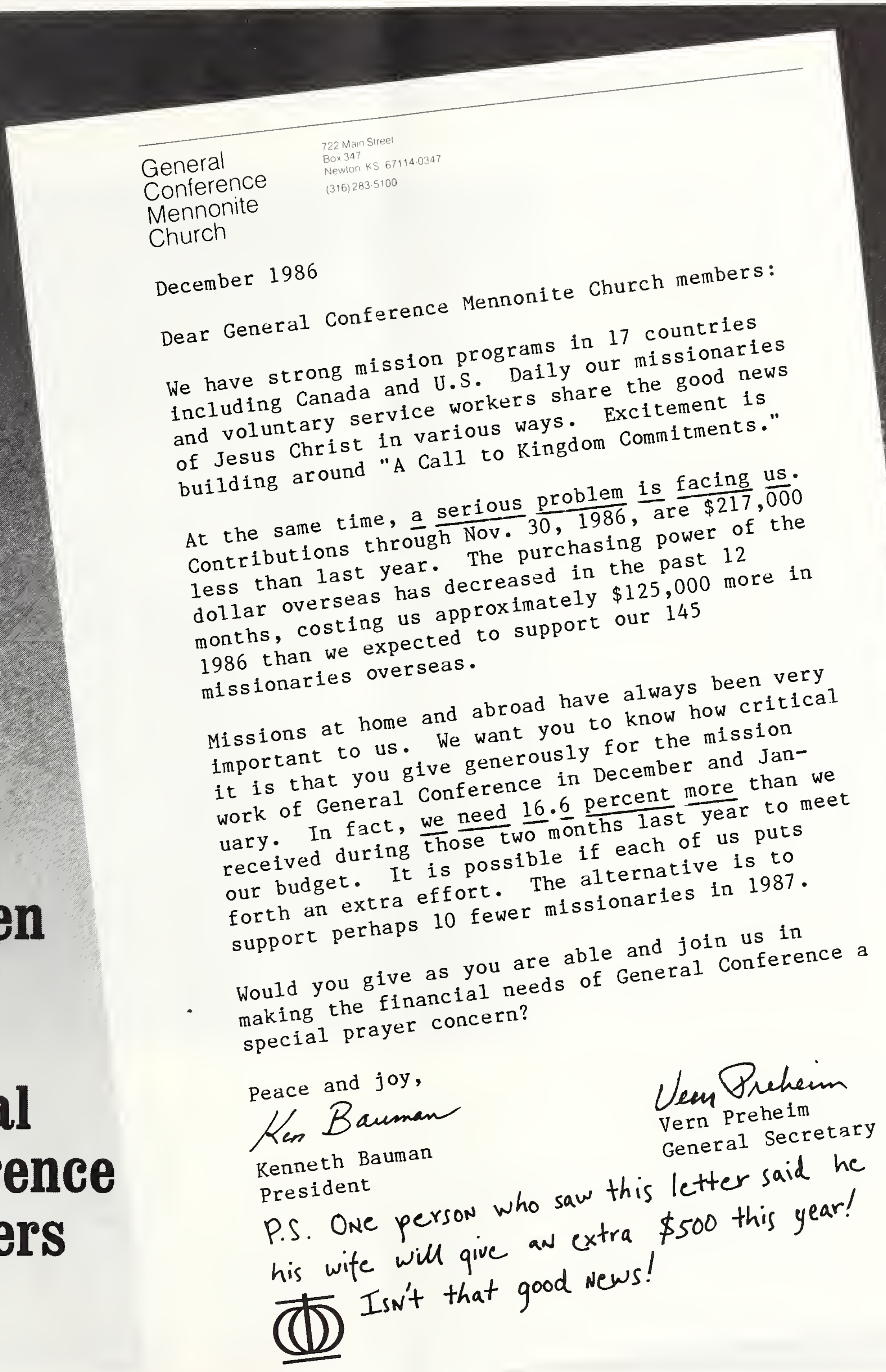
An Open Letter to General Conference Members



General
Conference
Mennonite
Church

722 Main Street
Box 347
Newton KS 67114-0347
(316) 283-5100

December 1986

Dear General Conference Mennonite Church members:

We have strong mission programs in 17 countries including Canada and U.S. Daily our missionaries and voluntary service workers share the good news of Jesus Christ in various ways. Excitement is building around "A Call to Kingdom Commitments."

At the same time, a serious problem is facing us. Contributions through Nov. 30, 1986, are $217,000 less than last year. The purchasing power of the dollar overseas has decreased in the past 12 months, costing us approximately $125,000 more in 1986 than we expected to support our 145 missionaries overseas.

Missions at home and abroad have always been very important to us. We want you to know how critical it is that you give generously for the mission work of General Conference in December and January. In fact, we need 16.6 percent more than we received during those two months last year to meet our budget. It is possible if each of us puts forth an extra effort. The alternative is to support perhaps 10 fewer missionaries in 1987.

Would you give as you are able and join us in making the financial needs of General Conference a special prayer concern?

Peace and joy,

Ken Bauman
Kenneth Bauman
President

Vern Preheim
Vern Preheim
General Secretary

P.S. One person who saw this letter said he and his wife will give an extra $500 this year! Isn't that good news!

A tribute to Michiko Takarabe

Anna Dyck

Editor's note: In the last (Dec. 9) issue of The Mennonite *we announced the death of Michiko Takarabe, a Mennonite pastor's wife in Nobeoka, Japan. Her death was the first among the Japanese Mennonite church leadership. Here are two responses from her community.*

Michiko Takarabe was born on Sept. 23, 1936, and was called to her eternal home Oct. 5, 1986.

When I first learned to know Michiko (Onitsuka) she was living with her mother in Takasaki, a small town halfway between Miyakonojo and Kobayashi. She was baptized under the ministry of missionaries John and Katherine Woollett. But since they moved away shortly after Verney and Belva Unruh began work in that area, she joined the Unruhs' group.

She took kindergarten teacher training at the Child Evangelism School near Osaka, then served in the KeiAi Kindergarten in Aburatsu for many years and later in a kindergarten in Tokyo.

Takeomi Takarabe and Michiko Onitsuka were married in 1965 and immediately took up the responsibility of pastoring the Atago Church in Nobeoka. She was loved and respected by many people—always cheerful, uncomplaining, willing, kind and caring, just spreading love around.

She developed discomfort and pain in her chest that resembled arthritis or some "nerve condition," but that took on serious proportions in May and June of this year. She found it difficult to breathe and so fearful it might be something more serious that she went to see her doctor on July 5, just in case it might get worse over the weekend. She was hospitalized immediately in the prefectural hospital just a few minutes walk from her home.

The following week she underwent extensive tests, and fluid removed from her lungs revealed metastacized cancer cells. The doctors never did find where the original tumor was located. Pastor Takarabe, her husband, shared the test findings with her. Together they decided she would undergo chemotherapy. However, fluid continued to gather in her lungs until it got to be a process of treating symptoms rather than the disease itself. There were successive days when they removed 1,000 cc at a time.

集会案内
日曜日
日曜学校 午前九時より
礼拝
水曜日
聖書の学び （昼）
と祈り会 （夜）
その他 英語クラスやいろい
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延岡市愛宕町二丁目三番地二
日本メノナイト キリスト教会会議
愛宕キリスト教会
牧師 財部

Michiko and Takeomi Takarabe in 1983.

Many people in Japan and abroad prayed earnestly for her healing, but the Lord saw fit to call her home Oct. 5, exactly three months after she entered the hospital. She went quietly and in peace. Pastor Takarabe stayed with her almost constantly until the end. We want to continue to pray for him as well as their daughter Yurika (now in her second year of university) and their son Akito (in the sixth grade).

Michiko left a beautiful testimony, for which reason she will be missed so much the more. There were many tears at the funeral but also an atmosphere of victory. Even though we can't understand, we can thank and praise our heavenly Father for allowing her to come into our lives and sharing his love with us.

Missionary Anna Dyck lives at 20688-29 Kasugadai, Shimo Tajima, Sadowara Cho, Miyazaki Ken, Japan 880-02. Her home church is North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

The importance of life

Sachiko Kojima

Among the people I have respected most was a pastor's wife. She had two children. The younger one is in the sixth grade. She was a strong woman. Even when she had hardships or sorrows, she never stopped smiling.

When I was a little girl and saw her for the first time, I thought she was a wonderful woman. I still think so. But she got sick with lung cancer. They say that a person who has cancer feels sharp pain. The disease had spread to various parts of her body so that she could not have an operation.

In such a bad condition, she said to the people who visited her, "God gives me peace in my heart." When I heard these words, I thought she was strong. She might have been worried about her children.

Her way of living and death taught me many important lessons. One day in October of this year, after she had been in the hospital for about three months, she died. At that moment she went to heaven in peace. I think she had no anxiety, even when she left her husband and two children behind, because she had lived a full life to the end. Many people were deeply moved by her death. I am one of them. As a friend of her son in the sixth grade, I would like to encourage him.

People can die if they want to die, but there are lots of people who cannot live even if they want to live. I fully realize that life is important.

When I read newspapers or watch TV, I sometimes notice that there are children who have committed suicide. They might be defeated by difficulties or by the weakness of the mind. I want them to try to be strong. By overcoming hardships or sorrows, we can have the pleasure of living, I think. I would like to say, "Boys and girls, be strong. Let's live."

Now I am in good health. I am thankful for that. The woman I have respected most suggested the importance of life to me. How lucky it was that I met her and we became friends! I think I shall never forget her. I must live strongly and seriously like her. I want to live on, thinking that there are people who cannot live even if they want to live.

Just a word in conclusion. Nothing is more important than life, I believe.

Sachiko Kojima, a first-year high school student at Tomishima High School, Hyuga, Japan, wrote and gave this speech in honor of Michiko Takarabe for an English contest. She won first prize in Miyazaki Prefecture and will go to the national speech contest in Tokyo. Sachiko is a member of the Hyuga Christian Church (Mennonite).

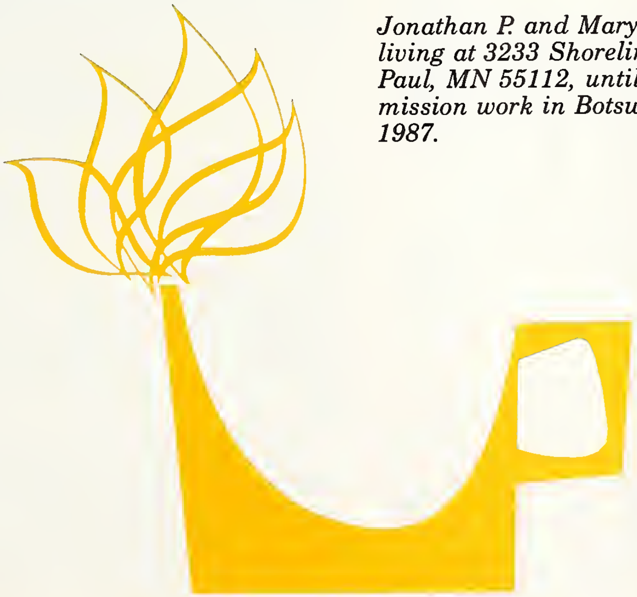
The lamps of Bhopal

Jonathan P. Larson

The festival lamps were burning in Bhopal. We saw them as our cross-country train passed the city on a winter evening. They are the lamps of Divali, annual Hindu festival of rejoicing, of wealth and good fortune.

What raised this above the ordinary Bhopal's recent past, especially the leak of lethal gas that a year earlier had carried hundreds to their deaths and left thousands more with broken health? The aftermath of the cataclysm flatters no one. Protracted court proceedings have so far denied the victims fair compensation.

When the lamps are seen against that darkness they are all the more wonderful and telling. So fragile are those lights, flickering in the slightest stir. Yet in Bhopal they seem to burn with temerity, with a kind of defiant joy in the face of colossal loss.



Their soft glow is a summons, reflected in the face of another faith, to a Christian hope, a hope that perseveres, that laughs at long odds and cares little for "realism" in its joy, concern and love. As Paul said in a rhapsody of faith,

"We are treated as imposters,
and yet are true;
as unknown,
and yet well-known;
as dying,
and behold, we live;
as punished,
and yet not killed;
as sorrowful,
yet always rejoicing;
as poor,
yet making many rich;
as having nothing,
and yet possessing everything"
(2 Corinthians 6:8b-10 RSV).

Such are the festival lamps that burn in Bhopal.

Jonathan P. and Mary Kay Larson are living at 3233 Shoreline Lane, St. Paul, MN 55112, until their return to mission work in Botswana early in 1987.

Church social action

The Church in the World *by Robert E. Webber (Zondervan, 1986, 368 pages)*

Reviewed by David Bartow, Upper Milford Mennonite Church, Box 36, Zionsville, PA 18092-0036

Since its beginning the church has struggled to know how it should relate to the world. In his book *The Church in the World* Robert E. Webber addresses this question. The purpose of the book is to "provide the biblical, historical and theological data needed to think constructively about evangelical social action in the contemporary world setting."

Webber begins by looking at the New Testament usage of the terms "world," "powers" and "church." He concludes that the powers of evil work in and through the structures of existence to distort and pervert the use of God's good creation toward evil ends, that the church cannot be separated from Christ, who has conquered the evil one, and that the church witnesses to the defeat of both personal and corporate evil.

The bulk of the book compares various models of church with the biblical concepts. One section looks at models throughout church history, from apostolic times to the 20th century, including the Anabaptists. Another section does the same for various contemporary models. The final section draws together some conclusions about where the church is headed. Webber feels that "one of the most striking shifts in current church-and-world thought is the move toward a christological method."

I found much helpful material in Webber's book. I especially appreciated the overview of church history and contemporary models of church. The biblical studies were also helpful, especially the three appendices on "Kosmos" (World), "Ekklesia" (Church), and "Stoicheia" (Principalities) and "Dunamis or Exousia" (Powers).

The weakness of Webber's approach is that in summarizing the various models distortions can occur. Webber himself says that "each chapter is a summary of what could be a complete book." An extensive bibliography and good notes help to overcome this weakness.

Although intended as a classroom textbook, *The Church in the World* provides useful data for anyone struggling with the question of how the church relates to the world, especially in the area of social action.

Mennonite exodus

Beyond Those Mountains *by Dick Thiessen (Kindred Press, 1985, 148 pages)*

Reviewed by Helmut Isaak, 42630 S. Downing Road, Sardis, BC V2R 1B2

One of the most powerful paradigms of history is the Old Testament story of the Exodus. Leaving the land of slavery, crossing the desert and conquering the promised land of freedom and abundance of life is the dream of all oppressed people.

How an entire village of 217 people crossed the Amur River on sleighs on the night of Dec. 18, 1930, is the climax of the story of the Isaac Wiens family. The Amur was for them what the Red Sea was for Israel. China, Europe and Paraguay are like the years of the Exodus. And Canada is the promised land that needs to be conquered. After many years of hard work and many struggles, the Wiens family finally settles down in the area of Tofield, Alta., well adapted to the new culture and well established on their farm.

Dick Thiessen's biography is well-organized and reads easily. Thiessen shows a high degree of empathy with the Wiens family, especially with their simple lifestyle in the isolated villages in Russia. But the underlying theological questions of separation and the Mennonite exodus are not addressed. It would be naive to assume that Canada really is the promised land because of its favorable political and socioeconomic conditions. Or is the Wiens family, like so many others, finally ready to face reality when they send their children to institutions of higher education and become involved as responsible citizens in Canada's social and political life?

For those who want to know more about the history of Mennonites in Russia and South America, Thiessen's biography is highly commendable. Even for those who seriously struggle with the traditional Mennonite way of life, Thiessen's book will prove a helpful resource. But it does not—and from the perspective of Isaac Wiens cannot—give answers to the urgent questions of integration and assimilation into the Canadian way of life.

Becoming a disciple

Choose Life *by Bruce A. Yoder (Mennonite Publishing House, 1984, 105 pages)*

Reviewed by Lois Franz Bartel, 910 Belleview, La Junta, CO 81050

Choose Life is a study book for young people (and others) considering church membership. It's obviously written by a person who works successfully with youth.

Yoder deals with seven topics: God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, church, kingdom of God (God ruling in our lives now), prayer and the disciplines of service, confession and celebration.

Each chapter is consistently developed, beginning with a focus statement and a section on terms used, along with meaningful definitions. Example: "Atonement: God acting through sacrifices of animals that persons made to seek God's forgiveness and find at-one-ment with God." Creative questioning then takes the student into extensive Scripture study, and lines and charts are provided for writing responses: Example: "Read John 20:19-23. Picture yourself in the room with the disciples. How big is the room? Are there any windows? . . ."

Vivid analogies and similes are used: "Try to . . . get the feeling of having the ocean stretch out to the horizon before you. Imagine that each wave brings God's love to you. . . ."

Following the essay in each chapter is an opportunity for action. Example: "Create three symbols for incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection." Students are given guidance for writing paragraphs summarizing the specific study and the implications for the participant's life. Example: "Write a description of yourself five years from now on the supposition that you are able to do anything or go anywhere to live the kingdom of God to its fullest. What part of the vision can you begin to live today?"

The study is coordinated with the Foundation Series, and references are given to films. Yoder quotes Bonhoeffer and Richard Foster, and emphasizes the Anabaptist view of Scripture.

A leader's guide would enhance the book.

Old song, new meaning

White Christmas

Laura E. Bradbury

My old home church used to have what we called a "white Christmas." We brought gifts wrapped in white: mittens, gloves, socks, mufflers, sweaters, stocking caps, etc., to be given to the children in orphanages or to poor children. A green tree was trimmed in white and the white-wrapped gifts laid around it, a beautiful symbol of Christmas sharing.

At the same time my mother quoted an old saying, "Green Christmas, fat graveyard; white Christmas, lean graveyard." It meant that if fall weather was cool, then warmer than normal, cool, then warm, and plants stayed green, there was more sickness and death than when it got cold and stayed cold. A steady temperature, even if cold, was healthier, according to the saying. As a child I took for granted that "white Christmas" meant a Christmas without unnecessary suffering or death.

During World War II I heard Irving Berlin's song "White Christmas" on the radio. Hearing only part of the chorus, I took for granted that it meant a Christmas without unnecessary suffering or death. Then I saw the movie and was keenly disappointed. It just meant snow on the ground, no more.

Later I wrote words to the chorus that gave the term "white Christmas" the meaning I thought it should have:

I'm praying for a white Christmas
Symbol of God's love from above,
Of the angel's singing
The good news bringing
Of peace on earth to those who love.
I'm praying for a white Christmas
Folks living out the angels' song.
Without war, strife, violence or wrong,
Peaceful living, molding people strong.

I'm longing for a white Christmas
With love embracing humankind;
Many people on teams
To work toward bright dreams
Their wholesome, friendly goals entwined.
I'm longing for a white Christmas
Enemies love and become friends,
Through the grace a loving God sends,
Conflicts solved and turned to noble ends.

I'm working for a white Christmas
Earth's bounties used for human need.
To all hungry children
Good food be given,
And not denied by someone's greed.
I'm working for a white Christmas
As Christmas messages I write,
Let Christ's presence make your days bright
While we work for Christmases of white.

Laura E. Bradbury is a retired United Methodist minister. Her address is Box 648, Newton, KS 67114.

EDITORIAL

1986: the year of the quilt

Who can forget this year's quilts? Delegates at Saskatoon watched the careful, graceful unveiling of a large celebrative work of art that marks Women in Mission's 69 years while listening to the verbal altars that marked the way. Among the many symbolic block patterns on that quilt are Ocean Waves, Spool, Eggs in a Basket, Sister's Choice, Friendship Chain, Dove in the Window and Building Blocks, reminding us of (in the same order) missionary support, clothing the destitute, tithing, church involvement, providing scholarships, working for peace and passing on our heritage.

Then came the development plan with four quilt blocks symbolizing the four goals of the General Conference Mennonite Church: Hands of Friendship for increased evangelism, Crown of Thorns for teaching biblical principles, Tree of Life for training church leadership and Double Wedding Ring for achieving Christian unity. This Call to Kingdom Commitments includes spiritual renewal, service and leadership, achieving kingdom goals, and giving.

Quilts have come into their own. What's new is the attention they're receiving. *Mennonite Weekly Review* reports that during the first half of this year women at Grace Church, Pandora, Ohio, knotted 31 comforters, made a quilt and quilted three others for Mennonite Central Committee in addition to stitching one quilt for the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center.

Another such pocket of creativity is at Deer Creek Mennonite Church in Oklahoma. Here the women—among them a core of about seven—gather every Wednesday from 8:30 to 4:00, bringing a covered-dish lunch. People from other churches come to learn how to quilt. (The minister, if resident, gets invited.) Children and grandchildren are welcome. The Deer Creek Mennonite Church Quilters have a two-year waiting list of orders. They charge 10¢ per yard of the waxed thread used, and the money earned goes for missions and relief.

And remember the first all-day quilting at Mimura Mennonite Church in Japan held last February. Sandra Liechty reported then, "Although most of the 15 women present were not church members, heads nodded in agreement to the chosen Scripture, Ecclesiastes 3: 'To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven. . . . A time to rend and a time to sew.' "

1986 has been a season of quilts. Let's carry the motif a bit further.

I believe that the quilts ask us questions: Can we tolerate pluralism? Do we like the blending and contrasting of colors? Can we submit to the cooperation necessary to be part of a whole? Do we welcome differences? Will we "go for" multiculturalism in our conference? Do we invite variety in our congregations? Are we accessible? Easy to find? How do we feel about varying theological opinions within the church community? Can we bear to be around something or someone who is "strange," or even someone whom we fear? Are we able to deal with a subject that we fear—or one that is new to us? Can we risk getting to know the person who represents something that we fear?

Our comfortableness with quilts and the variety they represent indicates to me that we just might have it in us to be comfortable with pluralism—if we know what and who binds us together. We reaffirm that as we celebrate again the earthly coming of Jesus the Lord. Our "quilt" does have a stipulation: Jesus is Lord, and the Bible is our indisputable guide for faith and life. And, asserted Erland Waltner last month in Rosthern, Sask., "How we read our Bibles needs to be talked about *in Christian community.*"

Having settled that, let's talk some more.

Robert Ramseyer's words smite me: Those of us who are the most comfortable in the General Conference as it is now will have to change the most as the conference becomes increasingly multicultural. Ouch! What is that going to mean for me? For you?

I commit myself to anticipating and welcoming the varieties of people in our conferences, both personally and in the pages of this our magazine. I invite you to do the same. *mts*

Write The Mennonite, *Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, to receive a 1986 index at no charge.*

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